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NEGRO LABOR *in* *the* UNITED STATES

1850 - 1925

A Study in American Economic History

By CHARLES H. WESLEY, PH.D.
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*To the Armies of Labor, Black and White,
This Volume is Respectfully
Dedicated.*

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INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this study is to present a survey of the development and transition of Negro Labor in the United States from the period of slavery to the period of the entrance of Negroes into industrial occupations in large numbers. This development has been one of the marked features of American Economic History. The cultural life of the Negro population in America is being given serious study, and the racial contributions in the spirituals, the work-songs and the folk-lore are receiving new attention in literature. The story of the economic struggle of the masses to rise from the depths has been so obvious to the student of American economic progress that serious efforts to chronicle the steps in the advance have been few. The subjects of Slavery as an economic system and the Negro as a slave have received some attention in historical studies, but the study of the Negro as a laborer, and not as a slave, has been left to the realms of personal opinion, unsupported assertion and public discussion. This monograph seeks to give a documentary study of the Negro Labor movement from the historical point of view. It is a picture of group evolution and of group struggle. It is not only the study of a labor movement, but it is the story of economic progress and of the spread of industrialism among Negro-Americans.

It is well known that at first, the hosts of Negro slaves were intended for the gang system. Cotton, tobacco, rice and the plantation commodities created the demand for crowds of laborers. The needs of the

plantation soon called for a certain specialty in labor which neither the master class nor the Southern middle and lower classes could supply. Houses must be built, horses must be shod, agricultural implements must be manufactured and repaired, clothing must be made, and personal demands satisfied. The Negroes of the South learned to do this work, as well as the agricultural field work, throughout the period prior to the Civil War. As machinery and industrial organization were introduced, although handicapped by lack of training, they learned to do the work which required greater skill.

After the War of the Rebellion, the Negroes were left without their masters, who were accustomed to make contracts for them and to give orders concerning the tasks to be performed. The question which filled the minds of all groups then, was "Will the Negro Work?" The period of Reconstruction, from the economic point of view, gave rise to this new problem, and its solution was made more difficult by the creation of new opportunities and responsibilities. Is it true that the Negroes in their newly found freedom threw away their economic opportunities in order to seize hold of the political ones?

It has been asserted with emphasis that Negroes cannot become skilled workers because of inherent racial defects, and that this unavoidable difficulty accounts for the larger number of foreign laborers employed during the second half of the nineteenth century. It has been claimed also that Negroes will not organize themselves into unions for protection; that they prefer to work as unorganized workmen or to organize separately from the whites. As a matter of fact, the relations of Negroes with American Organized Labor have not been studied with serious intent. If we are to understand the problems connected with the labor of Negroes in the United States, our studies

must be raised above propaganda and personal opinion.

Negro labor did not enter skilled work in such numbers as did foreign labor in the eighties and nineties. Was Negro Labor displaced because it was inefficient and racially incompetent? Was the race, per se, incapable of filling a place in modern industrial organization? Is it true, as some assume, that mulattoes filled places of leadership and the blacks occupied the subordinate places? Were Negroes unthrifty, lazy and unreliable as a group? Solutions to these questions are sought in the pages which follow.

Some educational leaders made the claim that the Negroes should be trained in skilled trades in the industrial schools. Contrary to the usual belief this idea arose and was popularized among Negroes prior to the Civil War. It was claimed that industrial training was more important for Negroes than collegiate training. Other leaders in education demanded that the same training should be given to the American Negroes as to all Americans. This gave rise to the controversy between industrial and higher education which filled the last decade of the nineteenth century, and echoes of which are often heard in the present.

With the decrease of foreign immigration during the World War of 1914, new opportunities came to Negro labor. The aftermath of the War created greater demands. Industrial plants demanded the labor of the group which was once the bone and sinew of American economic life. Thus a new day dawned for the Negroes in America. At one period, the nation sought Negro labor even to the extent of defying the constitution and the state laws. At another period, the labor of Negroes was neglected and often opposed. At still another period, Negro labor is demanded, and efforts are made to continue its employment and advancement. It is to understand the

part which was played by Negroes in the development of this particular American Labor Problem that this study is presented.

It has been necessary, in order to arrive at the truth, to piece together bits of information which have been obtained in various ways and in many places. Pains have been taken, however, to gather a selected bibliography which would be sufficiently inclusive to bring the reader in touch with some of the source material for the study, and through the secondary references it should not be difficult to touch the available literature. Treatises have been written on isolated phases of the subject, to which the references call attention. The author desires to acknowledge his special obligation to Professor Edward Channing, under whose direction this study was completed and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History at Harvard University, June, 1925. Mention should be made also of the encouragement which was received from conferences with Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, at the beginning of the study, while the author was a graduate student in History at Harvard University. He is also indebted to the Librarians and assistants of the Library of Congress, the libraries of Harvard University, of the University of Pennsylvania, the New York City Library, the Howard University Library, and to officials of the United States Department of the Census, the United States Department of Labor and the American Federation of Labor at Washington.

CHARLES H. WESLEY.

Washington, D. C.
September, 1926.

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NEGRO LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES

CHAPTER I

SLAVERY AND INDUSTRIALISM

THE period during which the Compromise of 1850 was operative was one of the most critical periods in the development of American Sectionalism. Plantation economics and the domestic system were firmly established in the South while the industrial system had taken deep roots in the North and East. The North had found the free labor system profitable and supported it. In like manner the South was more determined than ever before to uphold a system of labor in which slavery was the fundamental condition. The leaders of the South through conventions and newspapers were determined to encourage the introduction of industrialism, and they were equally determined that slavery should be made tributary to it, and if the North insisted upon the abolition of slavery, then separation was the only solution.¹ In all of their discussions, slave labor was regarded as a necessary condition of the economic system of the South. Controversies were raised frequently between northern and southern interests regarding the merits of the systems of labor which were carried on in these sections.²

The major agricultural products of the South in 1850 were cotton, tobacco, sugar and rice. These

2 NEGRO LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES

products were raised largely by slave labor. The number of plantations engaged in raising these commodities shows the relative interest in each of them.

NUMBER OF COTTON, SUGAR, RICE, TOBACCO AND HEMP PLANTATIONS IN 1850

STATES	Number of Cotton Plantations Raising Five Bales and Over	Number of Sugar Plantations	Number of Rice Plan- tations Raising 20,000 Lbs. and Over	Number of Tobacco Plantations Raising 30,000 Lbs. and Over	Number of Hemp Plan- tations
Alabama	16,100	....	...	....	....
Arkansas	2,175	....	...	....	....
Florida	990	958	...	....	....
Georgia	14,578	....	80	....	....
Kentucky	21	....	...	5,987	3,520
Louisiana	4,205	1,558	...	....	....
Maryland .....	....	....	...	1,726	....
Mississippi	15,110	....	...	....	....
Missouri .....	....	....	...	....	4,807
North Carolina...	2,827	....	25	....	....
South Carolina...	11,522	....	446	....	....
Tennessee	4,043	....	...	2,215	....
Texas	2,262	165	...	....	....
Virginia	198	....	...	5,817	....
Total	74,031	2,681	551	15,745	8,327

(Compendium of the Census of 1850, p. 178.)

Cotton was still the ruling product of the South in 1850 and slaves were the necessary labor units for its production. Therefore, a relatively large number of the people of the South were interested directly in slavery. It is estimated that the total number of families holding slaves in 1850 was 347,725. This comprised about one-third of the whole white population of the slave states and about one-half of the whole population in the states of South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.³ The total slave population was 3,204,313, and its increase since 1840 was 28.8 per cent as against 37.7 per cent for the white population. The free Negro population of the United States in 1850 was 434,495.⁴ This part of the population had increased 12.5 per cent since 1840. The total Negro population in 1850 was 3,638,-

808.⁵ The presence of this large population and the demands for labor in agriculture and industry made possible its participation in the American labor movement before and after the Civil War.

The labor of Negroes, slave and free, has been one of the most important factors in the economic development of the southern part of the United States. The brawn and muscle of the Negro population created the basis for Southern wealth which was derived in the main from the cultivation of the soil. The greater part of the Negroes, therefore, found employment in agriculture. As far as it may be stated with any degree of certainty, the Negro agricultural workers were distributed in 1850 among the great staples of the South in the following proportions:⁶

Hemp	60,000	2.4	per cent.
Rice	125,000	5.0	" "
Sugar	150,000	6.0	" "
Tobacco	350,000	14.0	" "
Cotton, etc.	1,815,000	72.6	" "

These workers were employed by the gang and task systems. The latter system was used mainly upon the rice plantations. The cultivation of all of these products demanded the use of large bodies of Negro slaves. These field hands were directed usually by an overseer, and their successful employment depended not only upon their own labor but upon efficient overseers, who, it has been asserted, were hard to find.⁷

Observers found serious fault with the slave's labor. Olmsted stated that the slaves "seemed to go through the motions of labor without putting strength into them," and that they moved "very slowly and awkwardly." He found also that four Virginia slaves could not accomplish in agriculture what one ordinary free farm-laborer could do in New Jersey, and that the excessive weight and clumsiness of the tools made plan-

tation work ten per cent greater.⁸ Robinson, a visitor upon a rice plantation, observed that the slaves worked their hoes so slowly that "the motion would have given a quick-working Yankee convulsions."⁹ There were also sick, aged and infirm slaves upon many plantations. These persons were unable to work and were often great burdens to their owners. However, in spite of these classes of individual Negroes who, to the Northern observer, seemed to be obstacles to successful labor enterprise, the South held on to its Negro slave labor system. Its advantages in the production of wealth seemed to outweigh its disadvantages. It was estimated that Negro labor contributed annually to the wealth of the South about \$30,000,000, and one writer waxed eloquent with the statement that the Negro workers of the cotton states were "the most regular, uniform and efficient body of laborers to be found in the world."¹⁰

Great effort has been made to show how unprofitable labor with slaves was for the South because of racial inferiority. This has been stated so repeatedly by voice and pen that it has become a very old American tradition; that is, that Negroes have been inefficient workers, not because they were slaves, but because they were Negroes. Says A. H. Stone, "In truth, it was not slave labor but Negro labor which was, at bottom, responsible. The contrast between North and South was not the contrast between free and slave labor, but that between white and Negro labor."¹¹ The fact is, however, that slave laborers of every race have been unsatisfactory workers, and slave labor as compared with free labor has always been less efficient, whether it was the slavery of Europeans or Africans. War, trade, crime and gambling were the sources of slavery in Europe and the East; and no race group which has been once free and then enslaved has worked as efficiently for others as they have worked for themselves.

The slave helpers of the ancient Greek and the Italian cities gave competition to the free workers, but the latter continued to have the advantage in workmanship. Medieval serfdom and English apprenticeship in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries showed the same decreasing returns in skill and versatility as did Slave Labor in the United States.¹²

In addition, slaves and groups which are depressed by a master class, have always engaged in petty vices—in thievery from their masters, in discontent and rioting, in runaway efforts and indifferent work. The results have been the same whether among Greeks, Romans, Germans, Anglo-Saxons or Africans.¹³ It is the economic and social depression which produces the bad effect. The history of slavery and oppression reveals the same results in all groups. Moreover, when it was difficult for slaves to be free, or to hope to be free, or for the early apprentices to become journeymen and masters, the permanent subordination became irksome and the worker soon lost the efficiency which his group may have once possessed and degenerated into a machine operating at the master's command. The results were especially characteristic of the slave system of agricultural labor in the South. It is well to note that this condition among the Negroes was aggravated by their contact with a portion of the population which secured its existence by practicing these vices. This group included those who obtained their "precarious support—by agricultural labor in competition with the slaves—by corrupting the slaves and seducing them to plunder for their benefit."¹⁴ This relation with the slaves was regarded by some as "the most serious burden upon slave labor."

The Negroes of America contributed not only to the planting, growing and harvesting of the great staples of the South as slave field-workers, but also to the skilled and semi-skilled labor which the economic

life of the South demanded. The mechanical pursuits of the plantations and of the towns were followed by the slave and free Negro population. Among this group of skilled laborers there were the blacksmith, the carpenter, the wheelwright, the mason, the bricklayer, the plasterer, the painter, the tanner, the miller, the weaver, the shoemaker, the harness-maker, and the cooper.¹⁵ Their presence is shown by the advertisements for the sale of slaves, the purchase of slaves, and by the notices of the rewards for the return of fugitive slaves, of which the following are selected examples:

"Negroes wanted—some good carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers and bricklayers."—Wilmington, (Va.) Journal, September 3, 1847. Slaves for sale—on hand, house servants, field hands and mechanics."—New Orleans Picayune, October 18, 1846. "Fifty Dollars Reward—Runaway from the subscriber, Josey, a carpenter by trade."—Charleston Mercury, October 15, 1853. "... Robert . . . a carpenter by trade, who has managed rice and sawmills—Jackey, a good shoe and boot-maker."—Charleston Mercury, December 26, 1853. "... a finished house carpenter, a perfect workman."—New York Tribune, August 29, 1854, quoting the Charleston Mercury. "One Hundred and Fifty Negroes for sale—consisting of field hands, house-servants, bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers, blacksmiths, painters, seamstresses, shirt-makers,—a superior blacksmith accustomed to do all manner of plantation work, and has also worked in repairing machinery."—New Orleans Picayune, January 29, 1853.¹⁶

In many cases the plantation manufactories were said to be conducted like small commercial industries.¹⁷ These mechanics, slave and free, rendered good service to their communities. In the towns, especially in Georgia and in adjoining states, freedom for the Negro was an evidence of skill in some trade or industry.¹⁸ Some of these mechanics became so successful that they purchased slaves. Their assistants and

helpers were often held as slaves by them. In nearly all the states there were Negro plantation owners who were Negro slave owners, and there were many who were known to be prosperous and wealthy.¹⁹

Proposals were made in 1850 to use slave labor more generally in the quarrying and working of granite and the mining of coal;²⁰ and a few years later it was proposed to use them on the public works in Virginia. They had been employed in various parts of the state with marked success.²¹ They were used at the mills and furnaces where they became "expert workers in iron," and it was hoped that they would be used more widely.²² The purpose of these proposals was the extension of the use of slaves so that larger numbers of southern people would be more dependent upon slave labor and accordingly more willing to join in its defense. The intention of the pro-slavery group during the antebellum period was not only to urge the extension of slavery in the territories of the United States but to extend it intensively and make larger numbers of the people of the South look to slave labor for their support. The owners of slaves found it profitable to hire their slave mechanics by contract to others who needed their services. This was found to be a very profitable business and the extensive employment of hired slave artisans shows the value of the Negro mechanic to the South. The average annual sum which was paid to owners of hired slaves in Virginia was around one hundred and twenty dollars with board and lodging.²³ Some of these workers enjoyed a virtual monopoly in their industries, as they had processes, unknown to other workmen, by which the tasks assigned to them were done.²⁴

The movement for the introduction of machinery and the new industry into the South was at its height during the decade, 1850-1860. William Gregg, a leading manufacturer of South Carolina, writes that the

South in industry was at this time where New England was in 1820 or 1822, and that without the foreign obstacles with which New England had to contend, larger success for the Southern states was possible.²⁶ Leaders in political thought were convinced that efforts must be advanced in the interests of a new movement and that "whatever divisions exist in Southern politics, there can be none upon this of Southern Industrial Independence."²⁶ The South, it was said, was too dependent upon the North; it must secure a more combined system of railroads, it must build up a manufacturing interest in order to develop its resources, and thus there would be fewer distractions to endanger its peace.²⁷ Moreover, the slave population seemed to be increasing in so much greater ratio than the white population that some plan must be undertaken, it was felt, which would encourage immigration of larger numbers of whites. Only by this plan could it be hoped "to keep up the equilibrium of the two races."²⁸ The burden of the speeches and the debates of the Southern Commercial Conventions, to which attention is called later, was the importance of manufacturing to the future of the South. While there were those in these conventions who could see the incompatibility of manufacturing and slavery, there were others who believed that both could be maintained.²⁹ A study of the table on page 9 will show the relationship which existed between the slave population of the individual Southern States and manufactures in 1850. This table will permit several conclusions concerning groups of the Southern States.

Looking at this table and comparing the slave percentage of the total population in each state with its manufacturing wealth per capita, one sees that the states with higher slave percentages have less per capita manufacturing wealth. For example, South Carolina ranks first in the proportion of its slave

THE RELATION OF SLAVERY AND MANUFACTURES IN THE SOUTH

1850 ⁽¹⁾
(2)

Rank	Slave Population in the Southern States in 1850	Percentage of Slave of Total Population		Number of Manufacturing Establishments	Cost of Labor Per Annum		Value of the Product		Total Population of the State		Manufacturing Wealth Per Capita	
		Rank	Percentage	Rank	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value
1	Va.	7	33.2	1	2	5,434,476	2	29,602,507	1	1,421,661	6	20.80
2	S. C.	1	57.5	8	9	1,127,712	8	7,045,477	8	668,507	8	12.50
3	Ga.	6	42.1	7	8	1,709,664	7	7,082,075	4	906,185	11	7.09
4	Ala.	5	44.	9	10	1,105,824	11	4,528,876	6	771,623	13	5.08
5	Miss.	2	51.	11	12	771,528	12	2,912,068	9	606,526	15	4.08
6	N. C.	8	33.2	6	5	2,383,456	6	9,111,050	5	869,039	9	10.04
7	La.	3	47.2	10	7	2,033,928	9	6,779,417	11	517,762	7	13.00
8	Tenn.	10	23.8	5	6	2,247,492	5	9,725,608	2	1,002,717	10	9.07
9	Ky.	12	21.4	3	3	5,106,048	4	21,710,212	3	982,405	5	22.00
10	Md.	13	15.5	2	1	7,403,832	1	33,043,892	10	583,034	1	56.00
11	Mo.	14	12.8	4	4	4,692,648	3	24,324,418	7	682,044	4	31.00
12	Texas	9	27.3	14	14	322,368	14	1,188,838	12	212,592	14	5.04
13	Ark.	11	22.4	15	16	159,876	16	537,908	13	209,897	16	2.05
14	Fla.	4	44.9	16	15	199,452	15	668,335	15	87,445	12	7.06
15	D. C.	15	7.1	13	13	757,584	13	2,690,258	16	51,687	2	52.00
16	Del.	16	2.5	12	11	936,924	10	4,649,296	14	91,532	3	50.00

(1) Compendium of the Census of 1850, pp. 63, 82, 85, 86

(2) Abstract of the Statistics of Manufactures, Seventh Census, p. 143.

population and eighth in the per capita manufacturing wealth. Mississippi ranks second in the proportion of its slave population to the total population and fifteenth in the per capita manufacturing wealth. Louisiana ranks third in the proportion of its slave population to the total population and seventh in per capita manufacturing wealth. Florida ranks fourth in the percentage of slave population and twelfth in per capita wealth. Thus the states with the largest proportion of slave population have the lowest manufacturing interests and the lowest per capita manufacturing wealth. This conclusion is obvious. But there are variations from this conclusion.

Virginia, which ranks first among the slave states in slave population and seventh in the slave percentage of its total population, was also first in the number of manufacturing establishments, second in the list of those expending large sums upon labor for manufacturing, second in the value of its product, and sixth in the per capita wealth. The presence of the slaves in such large numbers appears to have had little effect upon the relative cost of labor, the value of the product or upon the number of establishments. In this state industry and initiative accompanied a high rate of Negro slave population. A further study of the counties of the state shows that the maintenance of this equilibrium is due largely to the economic interests of the western counties. Thus Virginia may be classed as an exception to the conclusion noted above, since it does not show any perceptible change except in the manufacturing wealth per capita. It was seventh in slave percentage to the total population and sixth in per capita wealth.

Maryland stands out as an exception of the opposite type to Virginia. The state of Maryland ranks tenth in slave population, thirteenth in the slave percentage to the total population, but also first in the amount

spent upon labor, second in the number of establishments and first in per capita manufacturing wealth. Both Maryland and Virginia show tendencies toward industry and wealth production in spite of the size of the slave populations. The character of the soil and its rich produce influenced this result without doubt. On the contrary, Georgia and Alabama show the divergence between manufacturing and the number of slaves in the reverse manner to Maryland. They rank high in slaves and low in manufacturing interests.

Carrying the observation to other states, it is found that in North Carolina and Tennessee the positions of the states are fairly equal as regards slave population, slave percentage, the number of establishments, the cost of labor, the value of the product, and per capita wealth. No direct relation between manufacturing and slavery can be discovered in these states. Kentucky and Missouri ranked low in the slave percentage of their population and high in the value of their product, the cost of labor, and per capita wealth. Texas and Arkansas ranked low in the slave percentage of their population and also low in manufacturing interests. Delaware also ranked low in all respects save in its per capita wealth which was high.

This table demonstrates that manufacturing interests in some states varied with the number of the slaves and also with the slave percentage to the total population. But manufacturing progress did not correspond in all the states with the slave population, so that the definite rule may not be developed that manufacturing could not be introduced because of slavery. Slavery was one of the causes for the backwardness of Southern industrial progress but there were other contributing factors. These factors varied with the geographic, the economic and the social conditions of each state and section. A close study of the table reveals this variation. As a rule students of this subject

have been content with the statement that it was owing to slavery that manufacturing was not carried on in the South, thus placing the burden directly upon slavery, and by inference upon the slaves.³⁰

It is assumed that manufacturing in the South was impossible not only because there were slaves, but more particularly because there were Negroes slaves.³¹ On the contrary, the serious student will look beyond the surface differences of color and he will examine the entire system of economic society in the South. It will be seen that there are two factors in the equation, the Negro and the white Southerner. Slavery affected both, the enslaved as well as the enslaver. Not only must the Negro slave be considered, but the life of ease which was made possible among the planter class. This existence did not encourage industry or initiative in business or in agriculture as did the life of the North.³² The enterprising spirit of the North and East has been the dominating circumstance of American Industrialism. The ideal life in the South was the life of ease and comfort which was guaranteed by freedom from labor and oftentimes from even the direction of labor. This condition was brought about by slavery, but the element of personal aptitudes, personal tastes, individual and group thought, as they were expressed in Southern life, should be given consideration. For these in themselves occasioned slavery. In a rural society, where wealth was reckoned by the extent of land and slave-property owned, where there was a fixed gulf between the land-owning aristocrat and the man who had stained his hands by servile labor, where towns were small and industry was largely domestic, where transportation and commerce were weak—in such a society, manufacturing was impossible. The only way to introduce manufacturing on a large scale was to change the society. The Southern social system was based upon cheap human labor, while the

rest of the world was seeking cheap mechanical labor. As long as groups of men were cheaper than machines, industrialism must wait. But by 1850, even in the South, human labor was becoming dearer and mechanical labor cheaper. Modern civilization was being built upon cheap mechanical power while Southern civilization was built upon the degrading of humanity. So long as the basis of a social system remains unchanged, the superstructure—its civilization—remains alike unchanged. But with the basis of the Southern social system shaken by the Civil War, slowly and painfully the entire system has been crumbling.

It had been proposed prior to 1850 that the slaves should be employed in manufacturing in the South. As early as 1827, the proposal was made in Virginia and other Southern states for the employment of slave labor in the manufacturing of coarse cotton and other goods. It was said that this project would diffuse prosperity wherever it would be adopted.³³ In 1845, Governor Hammond of South Carolina wrote to Thomas Clarkson that "We are beginning to manufacture with slaves."³⁴ The slave population had about doubled since 1820, and it appeared in 1850, that at the end of the next thirty years the slave population would be six millions and a half. The only solution for this increasing population was to employ it "in cotton and woolen factories . . . in iron furnaces . . . in our factories and work shops . . . and in the manufacture of such articles as are now made almost exclusively in the Northern states."³⁵ It was declared that the United States had become the second commercial nation of the world by the agency of slave labor, and that it could become the first when a portion of this labor should be directed to manufacturing enterprises.³⁶ The spindles and factories, to be located near the fields, would save not only through cheaper labor costs but also because it would

obviate the necessity for transportation.³⁷ The subject of the use of slaves in industry became so prominent that the Southern and Western Convention at Charleston, April 10-15, 1854, passed a resolution toward the end of the session proposing that a committee should report upon the number of manufacturing plants in the states and the number of operatives, slave and free, in each.³⁸ There is no evidence in later conventions that this task was ever completed. Another resolution was presented stating that "experiments have fully proven that slave labor can be profitably employed in manufacturing establishments," and that, in the opinion of the convention, "an extensive application of such labor to manufacture would greatly benefit the South."³⁹

Throughout the period 1850-1860, arguments were waged in favor of and against the use of Negroes in manufacturing. An appeal was made to the owners of slaves "to bring to the aid of this available and efficient corps of regular laborers in the field, the steam engine and the iron muscle of spindle and loom."⁴⁰ Negro labor, properly directed, it was said, would be found as effective as "the ignorant and miserable operatives of Britain."⁴¹ There were differences and also similarities between English apprenticeship and American slavery. The apprentices of England, especially the pauper apprentices, grew up debased and demoralized. They were often driven to work at the point of the lash. Horses were kept saddled to bring back the fugitives who fled from their tasks, and blacksmiths made fetters for them. The English factory workers of the early nineteenth century were ignorant and subjugated men, women and children, until the reform movement gave birth to the factory legislation which improved their condition.⁴² While there were writers who thought that the Negroes would be efficient factory operatives and as effective as the English operatives,

there were other writers who opposed the use of slaves in manufacturing. It was argued that they should be used in the fields where they were particularly fitted and the mechanical pursuits should furnish employment for the white population.⁴³ Still others opposed the introduction of the white mechanics, for they would become "hot abolitionists," they would have the vote and they would imagine that, in fighting against the planters, they were fighting against aristocracy."⁴⁴

Meanwhile progress was being made in various localities by the introduction of slaves into small scale manufacturing such as the South afforded. Profitable manufacturing plants for cotton-bagging were established in Kentucky and in South Carolina; and in parts of the Western states manufactories were conducted.⁴⁵ Slaves were employed in cotton factories in South Carolina, and there were cotton factories in Tennessee where all the labor was done by slaves and where there was not a single white man except the superintendent.⁴⁶ Manufactories were known to be successful with the labor of Negroes in other sections of the South.⁴⁷

Several thousand men were employed in the mining of iron and in conducting the iron furnaces in Tennessee, near the Cumberland River, and without a single exception the employees were slaves. One company which was capitalized at \$700,000, owned seven hundred slaves who were engaged in this industry.⁴⁸ They were employed in the tobacco factories of Richmond and Petersburg where some of them earned from one hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars a year. Those who were free, in this group in Virginia, were paid according to their tasks. One man had earned nine hundred dollars but it was said that he had saved none of it.⁴⁹

There were other instances of the employment of slaves in manufacturing establishments in the South,

particularly in South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia. Typical instances will be noted. The work of the Saluda factory near Columbia, South Carolina, attracted considerable attention. All the operatives of this plant were Negroes except the overseers and the superintendent, who had come from the Northern manufacturing sections. The company which controlled the factory had a capital of \$100,000. It employed 98 operatives and, including children, there were 128 workers. The mill consisted of 5,000 spindles and 120 looms. Heavy brown shirting and Southern stripe, which was a coarse kind of colored goods, were the fabrics which were made. The superintendent found that the labor of slaves was cheaper than free labor and that slaves could endure the work of the cotton mills better than the whites. The Negroes were used first in the spinning department and were transferred gradually to the weaving room. The head weaver stated that there was as much work done by the Negroes and that they were more attentive to the condition of the looms. After two years of experiment, the results were found to be in favor of slave operatives in the mills, as the work was efficiently done and a saving of thirty per cent in the cost of labor was secured. This factory was operated by the labor of slaves until the close of the War, when slave labor was replaced by white labor.⁵⁰

A cotton manufactory was situated also at Arcadia, which was about seventeen miles from Pensacola, Florida. The machinery of this factory was operated by Negroes. Five thousand yards of domestic were turned out weekly. The operatives were "young, intelligent and cheerful." The mill was in operation a little over a year, and the results more than answered the expectations of its originators.⁵¹ At Scottville, Bibb County, Alabama, there was "a manufacturing village" where slaves were employed. The first prof-

its, \$2,200, which were realized in 1841, were spent for a family of Negroes who were to work in the factory. After that time the company made other purchases, and in 1858, a value of \$25,000 was placed upon its Negroes. This mill was located in a large brick building of three stories. It contained the best machinery, and employed one hundred operatives, three-fourths of whom were females. There were about 25,000 spindles and 50 looms at work. Every year since 1841 a dividend of ten per cent had been declared and the capital stock increased to \$117,000. The company owned three thousand acres of land and several buildings, which consisted, beside the factory, of a large hotel, a store, the smithery, the carpenter's shop, the wheelwright's place, and the boot and shoe shops. In addition, there were the saw-mill, the grist mill, a large flouring mill, a church and cottages.⁵²

In Mississippi, ten miles south of Greenville, there was a cotton factory in which there were Negro workmen. There were 800 spindles, 10 cards and 12 looms, and the necessary machinery for spinning and weaving. A large Semple engine was used, which was made by Thurston, Green & Company of Providence, Rhode Island. This engine was operated by a Negro who was said to have had no acquaintance with engines before he began to operate this one.⁵³

In South Carolina, there was a plantation where machinery was seen which was more extensive and better for threshing and storing rice than any used for grain upon any farm which had been seen in Europe or America.⁵⁴ There were shops also where mechanics were at work, all of whom were slaves. The owner stated that these workers exercised "as much ingenuity and skill as the ordinary mechanics that he was used to employing in New England." One particular piece of carpentry was noticed, a part of which had been started by a New England mechanic and a part by one

of the plantation workers. Olmsted makes mention of his gratification at this discovery, because he had been told by others in Virginia, that the Negro mechanic was "incapable of working carefully." He had been told this so persistently that he had begun to believe it. One of the workers in this mill was a Negro who acted as a kind of overseer, and who was able to repair all the machinery, including the steam engine. In the same state, in 1856, there was a sawmill, driven by steam, which was attended by two Negroes;⁵⁵ and in Georgia, slaves had been employed with decided success in cotton factories.⁵⁶ Negro slave operatives were used in several other cotton factories in South Carolina; at the Vacluse Factory, the De Kalb Factory, and the Williams Factory.⁵⁷ They were employed also in small factories of various kinds in Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida.⁵⁸

Industrialism was making such advances in American life, and the employment of Negro slaves in Southern industry appeared to be so successful that the supporters of the movement were encouraged to greater effort. They insisted that Negroes had learned blacksmithing, carpentry, boot and shoe-making and all the handicraft trades as easily as white men, and that if young slaves were put into the factories so that they might grow up in that employment, "they would make the most efficient and reliable operatives that could be found in any country."⁵⁹ The cotton growers and overseers who had experience with Negroes knew that they could be made into efficient operatives, and that this opportunity would give a wider scope "to all the mechanical talent among the slaves."⁶⁰ Since the slaves had made shoes and built houses, they could make plows, harrows, etc., and in all mechanical pursuits they could become fine laborers.⁶¹ One writer calculated the time when Negro slaves would become trained engineers, weavers, spinners, smiths, and car-

penters.⁶² Another, who viewed the matter in the light of experience, was certain that there could be no doubt any longer in the mind of "any intelligent individual who is well acquainted with the mental and physical character of the black population of the United States that slave labor can be made as efficient as any other in this important branch of industry."⁶³ Slave labor was also termed "the best and cheapest factory labor in the world."⁶⁴ At the Macon Convention of Cotton Planters in 1851, and at the Montgomery Convention of 1852, a resolution was introduced recommending the erection of cotton mills in every county of the cotton states, and stating that the slaves were able to attend to the looms.⁶⁵

The goods which were manufactured by slaves were not all of them coarse and heavy materials, but there were fine fabrics as well. While the work of most of the antebellum plants was on crude, common, production, there was some work which was of a high order. The products of one factory had drilling which resembled the best French linen at a short distance. It was of superior quality, and was so regarded by "the most intelligent dry-goods merchants."⁶⁶ It was not uncommon to find female slaves who were gifted as milliners and dressmakers. Some had acquired superior skill and were hired to fashionable dressmakers. *The Boston Daily Republican*, August 30, 1840, quotes *The Norfolk Herald*—"For Sale—a colored girl, of very superior qualifications . . . I venture to say that there is not a better seamstress, cutter and fitter of ladies' and children's dresses in Norfolk or elsewhere, or a more fanciful netter of bead-bags, money purses, etc."

However, as a rule, the work of the Southern antebellum plant was of the rudest kind. It did not require a large amount of skill and the use of Negro slaves was not an impossible procedure in 1850. But

the skill of some slaves is particularly interesting and indicates the special attainment which some of them had reached. In Montgomery, there was a carpenter who had an unusual ability for calculations. This had been obtained without any instruction. He could give quick estimates of all descriptions of lumber to be used in building. He was an excellent workman and received as wages two dollars per day with overtime work. His efficiency had reached such a degree that he needed to receive little direction from his owner.⁶⁷ At Mount Vernon, there was a Negro carpenter who was skilled in the manufacture of cedar canes.⁶⁸ In the same state, there was a slave blacksmith who repaired the reaper when it refused to operate.⁶⁹ Daniel Williams of Newberne, North Carolina, was an experienced engineer, having attended to steam engines for nine years. He was regarded as a valuable man in this work, and in addition he was a practical tanner.⁷⁰

Since Negro slaves were not granted patents for protection of inventions, there is no accurate record of slave inventions. In 1858, the Commissioner of Patents having refused to grant a patent to a slave inventor, an appeal was taken to the Attorney-General of the United States, Jeremiah S. Black, who confirmed the refusal stating that he could not legally give the patent to either the master or the slave, because a slave, not being a citizen, could not be a party to a contract with either the government, or his master.⁷¹ This opinion followed closely the sentiment of the Dred Scott Decision. The master, without doubt, would be permitted to obtain a patent for himself but not to secure his slave in his right to an invention. An important invention in sugar-making by a slave could not be rewarded by a patent for the same reason.⁷² Booker T. Washington is the authority for the statement concerning an invention by a slave of the

"Hemp-Brake," which was a machine by which the fiber could be separated from the hemp stalk.⁷³ A number of mechanical appliances which came out of the ordinary problems of daily employment were attributed to the plantation workers.⁷⁴ On account of the denial of a patent to Benjamin T. Montgomery, who was a slave of Jefferson Davis, the Confederate Congress passed an act on May 17, 1861, providing that when the inventor was a slave, the master might take an oath that the slave was the original inventor and on complying with the law, he should receive all rights of a patentee.⁷⁵

It did not escape the view of some thoughtful persons in the South that training the Negro slave as an artisan and a mechanic was utterly unfitting him for slavery. It was said that "wherever slavery has decayed, the first step in the progress of emancipation has been the elevation of the slave to the rank of artisans and soldiers. This is the process through which slavery has receded, as mechanic arts have advanced."⁷⁶ In the development of modern European civilization, serfdom was doomed in those places where men began to work in the mechanic arts, and where men abandoned the rough work of the domestic system for the factory system, new conditions of life and liberty came to millions of men. As the craftsmen grew in number and as the craft guilds grew in power, the serfs slowly disappeared; and where serfdom did not give way to the New Day, the violence of revolution resulted. This change marks the beginning of the division between the civilization of the past and the civilization of the present.

This process was fundamentally true in the life of individual Negroes who lived in the medievalism of the South, and it may be noticed in the Free-Negro group in the decade prior to the Civil War. The leaders of insurrections throughout the eighteenth

century were Negro mechanics, nearly all of them former slaves. Richard Allen teamster and laborer, was the leader of the peaceful revolution within the Methodist Episcopal Church. Denmark Vesey, the industrious builder and carpenter, planned the insurrection of 1822, and Nat Turner, experimenter in paper, gun powder and pottery, led the Southhampton Insurrection in 1831. In the John Brown Raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859, there were five Negroes who took active part—Osborne Perry Anderson, a printer by trade; Lewis Sheridan Leary, saddle-and harness-maker; Shields Green, sailor; John Anthony Copeland, one time student at Oberlin, and Dangerfield Newby, occupation unknown. In urban and rural communities where slavery existed, the slave mechanics were the leaders in Negro life. These persons often purchased their freedom. They fled from slavery to freedom and they either hired themselves or they were hired by their masters on advantageous terms to other persons.⁷⁷ Training in the mechanic arts taught them to think and to depend upon their own resources. Such persons were manifestly soon unfitted for slavery.

In spite of the approaching industrial spirit and its evident influence upon Negro life, the extensive use of slave labor was urged by Southern statesmen, and this served to intensify the demand for slaves. The prices of slaves had been rising during the years prior to 1860, and the demand for slaves was unprecedentedly great during the same period. In spite of a growing free labor sentiment, agitation was begun for the reopening of the slave trade.⁷⁸ Political considerations as well as economic demands were involved in this movement. The trade was expected to give a large labor supply and this would make it possible for all persons to have farm workers and mechanics.⁷⁹ For with slaves more widely owned, a larger number of persons would be interested in the continuance and

preservation of the institution. In 1858, a bill which authorized the importation of 2,500 Africans as indentured servants for a term of not less than fifteen years, was passed by the Lower House of the Georgia Legislature.⁸⁰ This measure was indefinitely postponed in the Senate by a majority of two.⁸¹ The smuggling of slaves had already begun along the Mississippi River,⁸² and a few months later, contrary to the law, coolies were introduced.⁸³ An effort was made in Mississippi to reopen the trade. Such a bill was introduced into the Lower House. Its purpose was to bring in "a supply of African laborers." The Lower House passed the measure with an overwhelming majority but it was defeated in the Senate.⁸⁴ In South Carolina, similar action was reported.⁸⁵

The Southern Commercial Conventions, which met during the fifties, discussed the reopening of the Slave Trade and resolutions were frequently passed which favored this measure.⁸⁶ Northern observers regarded these suggestions with suspicion, and attention was called to their influence upon the country's labor situation.⁸⁷ By 1850, the agitation was "in full blast" to repeal the Congressional Acts forbidding slave importations and an African Labor Supply Association was formed in Mississippi with J. B. D. De Bow as President.⁸⁸ The Southern Commercial Convention which met in Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 9, 1859, passed a resolution stating that it was the opinion of the Convention that all laws prohibiting the African Slave Trade should be repealed. Delegates from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas voted for the resolution. Tennessee and Florida voted against it, and the vote of South Carolina was divided.⁸⁹ In spite of these efforts, slave labor had about run its course in American history and the movement for free labor and industrialism was steadily winning its way.

Upon the plantation, in skilled and unskilled labor, Negro workers were found. In various parts of the South they were used with measures of success in such manufacturing plants as the economic development of the South permitted. A talented number emerged from the larger group, demonstrated the possession of the special skill which the town and the plantation demanded and made themselves a necessity to a class of individuals who knew neither the value nor the process of labor. If slavery and industrialism had joined hands on an extensive plan, it is reasonable to assume that this cooperation could not have lasted many years. It was not, however, because the slaves—being Negroes—were incapable of attaining the necessary skill, which is demonstrated by the foregoing facts. The causes for this incompatibility between slavery and industrialism were inherent in the entire ante-bellum economic system to which a large part of both races in the South was in bondage.

REFERENCE NOTES

1. In 1849, Judge Tucker of Williamsburg, Virginia, sent to J. H. Hammond of South Carolina a plan for the establishment of a Southern Confederacy. B. Tucker to J. H. Hammond, January 30, 1849, J. H. Hammond Papers. See also Soule's Speech at Opelousas, Louisiana, September 6, 1851; DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. II, p. 127; Addresses and Resolutions by the Southern Convention held at Nashville, Tennessee, June 3-12, 1850, to the People of the South, pp. 14-17; A Glance at the Resources of the South in the Event of Separation, A Series of Articles originally published in the *Columbia (S. C.) Telegraph*.
2. New York Daily Tribune, March 14, 1853, replying to the Wilmington (N. C.) Commercial; Speech of J. H. Hammond, U. S. Senator from South Carolina, *Congressional Globe*, Vol. XIV, 35th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 961-962; Olmsted, *Seaboard Slave States*, pp. 334-335, quoting the *Richmond Examiner*; D. R. Goodloe, *The South and the North*, being a reply to a lecture on the North and the South by Ellwood Fisher; *The North and the South*, A Review, J. H. Hammond.
3. Compendium of the Seventh Census, p. 94. Negro Population, 1790-1915, p. 56.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 63, 82; pp. 25, 83, 85, 86. Cf. *Future Wealth of America*—Francis Bonyng, p. 189.
5. Negro Population, 1790-1915, p. 53.
6. Compendium of the Seventh Census, p. 94. One Pro-Slavery writer estimated the annual indebtedness of America for articles of slave labor origin, including the value of foreign and domestic cotton, and the cost of groceries, at \$162,185,240—Cotton is King, Elliott, pp. 65-66.

7. See *The Southern Plantation Overseer as Revealed in His Letters*, John Spencer Bassett. Typical plantations are described in Olmsted, *Seaboard Slave States, Journey in the Back Country, The Cotton Kingdom*. U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery*, Chapter XIII, *Types of Large Plantations*; H. T. Cooke, *The Life and Legacy of David Rogerson Williams*, New York, 1916. See also, Channing, *History of the United States*, Vol. V, Chap. V, "The Plantation System and Abolition"; F. P. Gaines, *Southern Plantation*.

8. Olmsted, *Seaboard Slave States*, pp. 91, 10, 19, 204, 46.

9. *American Agriculturist*, Vol. IX, p. 93.

10. *Western Journal*, Vol. III, p. 104. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. XXXV, p. 127; Bruce, *The Plantation Negro as a Freeman*, p. 175. Francis Bonyngne, *Future Wealth of the United States*, p. 197.

11. *The Negro in the South*, Publications of the University of Virginia, Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Papers, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1915.

12. Niebor, *Slavery as an Industrial System*, p. 299, 436-437. Ingram, *A History of Slavery and Serfdom*, p. 9-11; Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Book III, Chap. II; Wallon, *Histoire de l'esclavage dans l'antiquité*, Vol. I, Chaps. VI, XI. J. E. Cairnes, *Slave Power*, Chap. II.

13. Adam Gurowski, *Slavery in History*; A. M. Wergeland, *Slavery in Germanic Society during the Middle Ages*. In the introduction to this study, Dr. Jameson has well said that "We cannot hope to attain a true understanding of American Slavery in some of its most essential aspects unless we are somehow made mindful of the history of slavery as a whole."

14. Speech of J. H. Hammond before the South Carolina Mechanical Institute, J. H. Hammond Papers, 1849.

15. The occupations of the slaves have not been recorded by the Census Office, and it is difficult to approximate the number of mechanics or other workers. If there were 2,500,000 slaves engaged in large-scale agriculture and the total slave population was 3,204,313, the remaining number 703,315 would give the number who were engaged in activities aside from large-scale agriculture. If 400,000 of this number were urban slaves, then it would be possible to assume that there were 300,000 slaves who were occupied in the rural sections with activities which were not directly concerned with large-scale agriculture. An allowance should be made for those who were engaged in the raising of quantities of bread-stuffs, and for children, superannuates and domestic workers. *Compendium of the Census of 1850*, p. 94.

16. *New York Tribune*, August 16, 1853; January 9, 1855; *Columbia South Carolinian*, January 2, 1855; *New Orleans Commercial Bulletin*, January 30, 1855; *African Repository*, Vol. XXXIX, p. 18, January, 1853.

17. *African Repository*, Vol. XXIX, September 1853, p. 279.

18. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States*, p. 440.

19. *New York Tribune*, September 5, 1857; *Manuscript Returns of the Census of 1850*; Woodson, *Free Negro Heads of Families, 1830*.

20. *DeBow's Review*, July-December, 1850, Vol. IX, p. 435.

21. Charles Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, Vol. I, pp. 216-217. *DeBow's Review*, Vol. XVII, July-December, 1854, pp. 76-82. Approximately 400,000 slaves were urban in 1850 and 2,804,313 were rural—*Compendium of the Census of 1850*, p. 94.

22. *The Charleston Mercury*, November 19, 1853.

23. *DeBow's Review*, July-December, 1854, p. 77. Olmsted, pp. 186, 190, 83. At Catt's Tavern in Virginia, the men who were hired brought \$100 to \$125, and the women who were hired brought \$40 to \$50—*New York Tribune*, January 20, 1854. In 1854, the *Norfolk Argus* reported that the current wages for common labor were \$150 and for the best labor \$225. This price was said to be too high for employers to pay—*The Southern Banner*. In Louisiana in 1860, prime field hands brought from \$300 to \$360, and a blacksmith brought \$430—*DeBow's Review*, Vol. XXIX, p. 374.

24. *The North Carolina Historical Society—Historical Publications*, Vol. XVII, No. 1. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. XXXV, p. 125.

25. Gregg to Hammond, May 30, 1849—J. H. Hammond Papers.

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26. DeBow, *Industrial Resources of the Southern and Western States*, Vol. II, p. 483.
27. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 154.
28. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 127; Vol. III, p. 35. Gregg, *Essays on Domestic Industry*; Alvord to Hammond, April 25, 1849. J. H. Hammond Manuscripts.
29. The newspapers of the southern cities gave accounts of these conventions. See also, *Ante-Bellum Southern Conventions in Alabama* Historical Society Transactions, Vol. V, pp. 153-202; *Journal of Proceedings of the Commercial Convention of the Southern and Western States*, at Charleston, April 10-15, 1854; *The Charleston Mercury*, April 14, 1854; *New York Tribune*, January 20, 1855, gives an account of a convention at New Orleans; *Southern Quarterly Review*, 2nd Series, Vol. XVIII, pt. 2, pp. 191-232; *Helper's Impending Crisis*.
30. It was with this idea of the antagonism of slavery and manufacture that the opponents of slavery urged the introduction of manufacture in the South. The *Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for 1849*, quoted the *State Banner of Columbia*, S. C. in regarding manufacturing as not only a "fatal blow" at free trade but a "covert blow" at the institution of slavery; *Annual Report*, 1849, p. 49. Cf. C. S. Boucher, *The Ante-Bellum Attitude of South Carolina toward Manufacture and Agriculture*; Broadus Mitchell, *Rise of Cotton Mills in the South*, pp. 24-25, 209; D. A. Tompkins, *The South in the Building of the Nation*, Vol. II, p. 58; Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*, p. 523; W. H. Garmon, *The Landowners of the South and the Industrial Classes of the North*, p. 9; *Helper, Impending Crisis*, p. 25; Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States*, pp. 553-554.
31. *American Historical Review*, Vol. 13, p. 791—*Problems of Southern Economic History* by A. H. Stone.
32. Olmsted noticed this "in the habits and manners of the free white mechanics and trades people . . . a man forced to labor under this system is morally driven to indolence, carelessness, indifference to the results of skill, inconstancy of purpose, improvidence and extravagance."—*Seaboard Slave States*, pp. 146-148.
33. Hamilton, *Slave Labour in Manufactures*, p. 1.
34. DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. II, p. 254; Nordhoff, *America*, p. 10.
35. DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. II, p. 313; *New York Semi-Weekly Tribune*, June 13, 1854, quoting the *Richmond Enquirer*.
36. DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. II, p. 111.
37. *The Western Journal of Agriculture, Manufactures, Mechanics, etc.*, Vol. III, p. 96.
38. *The Charleston Mercury*, April 14, 1854; DeBow's *Review*, Vol. XVI.
39. *The Journal of Proceedings of the Commercial Convention of the Southern and Western States held in Charleston*, April 10-15, 1854, p. 33.
40. *Western Journal of Agriculture, etc.*, Vol. III, p. 102.
41. DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. III, p. 80. Gregg, the proprietor of the Graniteville factory, wrote that experienced overseers gave a decided preference to Negroes as operatives for two reasons: (1) that they give uninterrupted service from the age of eight years, and (2) that frequent changes of employment, as with the whites, do not affect them—*Essays in Industry*, p. 21. A Mississippian wrote that in the South it was well known that the slaves were "fine laborers" in mechanical pursuits and in the manufacture of cotton and woolen goods, *New York Tribune*, February 5, 1856.
42. Reports of the Royal Commissions of Enquiry and of The Factory Commissions of 1838, 1842. See also Gilbert Slater, *The Making of Modern England*, pp. 52-53. Gaskell, *Manufacturing Population of England (1833)*. Hammond, J. L. and B., *The Village Labourer, 1760-1832*.
43. DeBow's *Review*, Vol. VIII, p. 25; Vol. XI, pp. 318-319.
44. Memminger to Hammond, April 28, 1849, J. H. Hammond Manuscripts.
45. Hamilton, *Slave Labour in Manufactures (1827)*.
46. Olmsted, *Seaboard Slave States*, p. 104; *A Journey Through Texas*, p. 18. *New York Tribune*, February 5, 1856.
47. Nordhoff, *America for the Free Workingman*, p. 10; DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. II, p. 339; Mitchell, *Rise of Cotton Mills*, p. 209; DeBow,

Industrial Resources, Vol. II, p. 112; Buckingham, The Slave States of America, Vol. II, p. 41.

48. Nordhoff, America for the Free Workingman, p. 7; New York Tribune, January 1, 1857; This paper gives an account of the insurrection of the Negro laborers at the forges in Kentucky; African Repository, Vol. XXVI, p. 302.

49. Olmsted, Seaboard Slave States, p. 127; Lynchburg Republican, Petersburg Democrat, quoted by Atlanta Intelligencer, January 7, 1860.

50. DeBow, Industrial Resources, Vol. I, pp. 232-233; DeBow's Review, Vol. IX, July-December, 1850, pp. 432-433; Vol. XI, July-December, 1851, pp. 319-320; Nordhoff, America for the Free Workingman, p. 10; See also Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, Vol. 23, July-December, 1850, pp. 575-576. Philipps in American Slavery quotes the Augusta Chronicle, January 5, 1853, and states that the Saluda factory was closed in 1853; the opposite opinion, that this factory continued its slave labor until the close of the war, is stated by Kohn, Cotton Mills of South Carolina, p. 16; Mitchell in the Rise of Cotton Mills in the South states that this factory was burned by Federal troops, p. 212 (note); Annual Report of President and Treasurer of the Graniteville Manufacturing Company for the year 1854, pp. 12-13.

51. The Pensacola Live Oak, quoted by the Western Journal, Vol. I, pp. 154-155.

52. DeBow's Review, January-December, 1858, Vol. XXV, p. 717.

53. Ibid., Vol. LIX, July-December, 1850, p. 433; in Eighty Years of Progress (1862) by Eminent Literary Men, there is an engraving of Negroes running a cotton gin invented by C. V. Mapes; Vol. I, p. 112.

54. Olmsted, Seaboard Slave States, pp. 425-426; Olmsted had been told that the Negro's judgment could not be trained, that he would not use his mind and that he depended upon machinery to do its own work. This was the nature of the African, he was told, and although the disinclination to labor was present in all men, it was said to be stronger in the African race. Ibid., pp. 104-105.

55. New York Tribune, March 22, 1856.

56. DeBow, Industrial Resources, Vol. II, p. 112.

57. Kohn, Cotton Mills of South Carolina, pp. 16, 24-25; The Western Journal, Vol. I, p. 158; Mitchell, Rise of Cotton Mills in the South, pp. 211-213; Clark, History of Manufactures, p. 619, Appendix XI.

58. Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, Vol. XV, p. 548; XVII, p. 323; XXIII, p. 575; XXV, p. 517; DeBow's Review, Vol. XI, pp. 319-320; Mitchell, Rise of Cotton Mills, p. 19 (note); The Rocky Mount Mill in Edgecombe County, North Carolina, had employed Negroes from 1820 to 1851, when whites were then employed. The Manager wrote that "the owners of the slaves objected to the slaves working in the mill and I substituted whites as soon as I could."—Thompson, From Cotton Field to Cotton Mill, p. 251.

59. DeBow, Industrial Resources, Vol. II, pp. 112, 116; Nordhoff, America for the Free Workingman, p. 11.

60. DeBow, Industrial Resources, Vol. I, p. 231; William Gregg, in an address before the South Carolina Institute, stated that experience gave "decided preference to blacks as operatives."—New York Tribune, February 5, 1856.

61. The Mississippian, quoted by New York Tribune, February 5, 1856; DeBow's Review, Vol. II, p. 319.

62. The Western Journal and Civilian, Vol. III, p. 105.

63. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 158.

64. DeBow's Review, Vol. IX, July-December, 1850, p. 435.

65. DeBow, Industrial Resources, Vol. I, p. 139.

66. Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, Vol. XXV, July-December, 1851, p. 517.

67. Olmsted, Seaboard Slave States, pp. 553-554.

68. New York Tribune, March 4, 1859.

69. Nordhoff, America for the Free Workingman, p. 7.

70. African Repository, Vol. XXVI, pp. 304-306, October, 1850. Other slave engineers are mentioned in Olmsted, Seaboard Slave States, pp. 427-428.

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71. Official Opinions of the Attorney-General of the United States, 1858, pp. 171-172. It reads in part—"I fully concur with the Commissioner of Patents in the opinion he has given on the application of Mr. O. T. E. Steward of Mississippi. For the reasons given by the Commissioner, I think, as he does, that a machine invented by a slave, though it be new and useful, cannot, in the present state of the law be patented. I may add that if such a patent were issued to the master, it would not protect him in the courts against persons who might infringe it."—J. S. Black to Jacob Thompson, Secretary of the Interior, June 10, 1858.

72. New York Semi-Weekly Tribune, July 7, 1858.

73. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. XXXV, p. 126.

74. Henry E. Baker (Assistant Examiner in the Patent Office), The Colored Inventor, p. 6.

75. Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865, Vol. I, p. 241.

76. DeBow, Industrial Resources, Vol. III, p. 34.

77. Austin Steward, a fugitive himself, writes that as far north as New York, he saw in 1848 many fugitive slaves who were intelligent mechanics. He states that they were engaged in erecting different buildings there—Austin Steward, Twenty-two years a Slave and Forty Years a Freeman, p. 301.

78. Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, Vol. XI, p. 774.

79. DeBow's Review, Vol. XXV, July-December, 1858, pp. 491-506; Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society, p. 54.

80. Savannah Republican, March 13, 1858.

81. Ibid., March 22, 1858.

82. Ibid., March 4, 1858, quoting the New Orleans Delta and the Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel.

83. Savannah Republican, May 14, 1858.

84. DeBow's Review, Vol. XXV, p. 627.

85. Olmsted, Seaboard Slave States, p. 521. Report of the Special Committee of the House of Representatives of South Carolina Legislature, 1857, p. 24.

86. DeBow's Review, Vols., XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVII.

87. New York Tribune, May 15, 1858.

88. Vicksburg True Southron, May 13; June 7, 1859. DeBow's Review, Vol. XXVI, pp. 231-235; Twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh Annual Reports of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

89. DeBow's Review, June, 1859, p. 713.

CHAPTER II

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE FREE NEGRO

THE free Negro population in the United States in 1850 was 434,495, and in 1860 it was 488,070. Of this population in 1850, 45.5 per cent were in the North; 54.2 per cent were in the South, and the remainder, 0.3 per cent were in the West. The distribution in the South was: 45.4 per cent in the South Atlantic division, 4.5 per cent in the East South Central division and 4.3 per cent in the West South Central division.¹ In spite of the strenuous effort to execute the Fugitive Slave Law after 1850, the free Negro population increased in number. The free Negroes between 1850 and 1860 were increased by 23,736 in the slave states, and by 29,838 in the free states. There was a decrease of the free Negro element in Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas. Every northern state except Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York showed increases in the number of Negroes. In 1860 the free Negro population was distributed as follows: 46.2 per cent in the North; 52.9 per cent in the South, distributed with 44.6 per cent in the South Atlantic Division, 4.4 per cent in the East South Central and 3.9 per cent in the West South Central Divisions; and 0.9 per cent in the West. The migration of the Negroes was the cause for the change in numbers between 1850 and 1860. These movements were occasioned by flights from oppressive conditions, by manumissions, and by purchase, and it was by way of the Underground Rail-

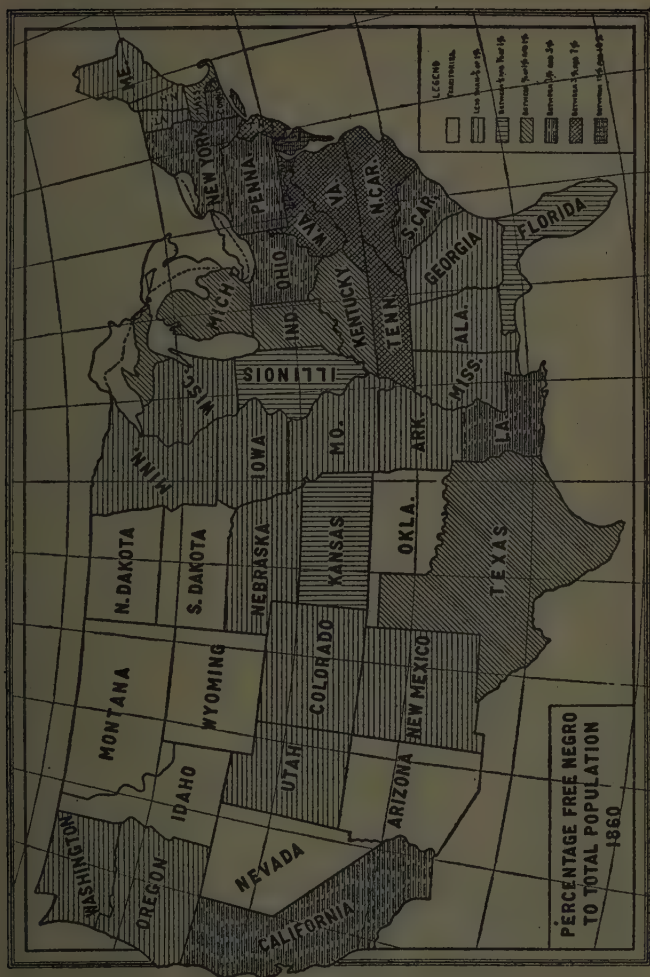
road, that many Negroes often found their way to freedom.

The adjustment to the new environment in the North often occasioned hardships. This condition was seen by one group of travelers and from it conclusions were drawn concerning the free colored group. Thus Frances Kemble writes: "They are not slaves indeed, but they are pariahs, debarred from every fellowship save with their own despised race, scorned by the lowest white ruffian in your kitchen. They are free, certainly, but they are also degraded, the offscum and the offscouring of the very dregs of your society."² This was written particularly concerning the free Negro population of the North. In the city of Baltimore, a slaveholder replied to one who asked him why he did not liberate his slaves, "Shall we liberate our slaves while freemen are in such miserable condition?" He referred to the condition of the free Negroes whom he saw "living in the alleys and by-ways of the city."³ Another observer remarked that in the city of Philadelphia there were "no professional

PERCENTAGE FREE NEGRO TO TOTAL POPULATION—1860

Refer to Map on Facing Page

Maine	0.2	Wisconsin	0.2
New Hampshire	0.2	Minnesota	0.1
Vermont	0.2	Iowa	0.2
Massachusetts	0.8	Missouri	0.3
Connecticut	1.9	Nebraska	0.2
Rhode Island	2.3	Kansas	0.58
New York	1.3	Kentucky	0.9
New Jersey	3.7	Tennessee	6.5
Pennsylvania	2.0	Alabama	0.3
Delaware	17.7	Mississippi	0.09
Maryland	12.2	Arkansas	0.03
District of Columbia	14.7	Louisiana	2.6
Virginia	3.6	Texas	0.59
North Carolina	3.06	Colorado	0.1
South Carolina	1.4	New Mexico	0.1
Georgia	0.3	Utah	0.07
Florida	0.66	Nevada	0.7
Ohio	1.6	Washington	0.2
Indiana	0.9	Oregon	0.3
Illinois	0.4	California	1.1
Michigan	0.9		



black gentlemen . . . and very few who were even mechanics," and in New York the foreigners were so numerous that they pushed the Negroes not only out of "all mechanical trades but even out of the most menial labors." ⁴

Another group of observers, however, found the free population of color in the United States "a valuable class of citizens." It was said that there were men among them of education and refinement, and that large numbers of them were persons of sound sense and correct morals. The observer found that, "The order and ability of their proceedings in conventions, the eloquence and power of their speeches, the efforts made in sustaining schools, churches and benevolent institutions, are worthy of all commendation." ⁵ They were not only interested in these prospects but they were making agricultural efforts that were highly commendable. ⁶ A meeting of the Negroes which was held in Bethel Church, Jamaica, L. I., June 18, 1851, passed a resolution, that "we look with pleasure upon the evidence of progress among the free people of color throughout the country." ⁷ In Baltimore, Maryland, a Slaveholders' Convention was held June 8-10, 1859, in which it was asserted that the free Negroes were becoming formidable competitors of the white laboring population. The report of a majority committee refused to urge the expulsion of the Negroes from the State. The minority reported that the free Negroes were monopolizing the labor about hotels. They served as barbers, coachmen, draymen, steamboat waiters, sailors; and the report stated that in many ways the free Negroes were injuring the business of white mechanics. In the country, they rented farms and forced the other young men to leave the section. It was said that if emancipation went on and if the free Negroes were allowed to remain, then the state must "open all the avenues of remunerative labor by

which our citizens obtain a living." ⁸ *The New York Tribune* added the comment that this convention "intimates that if things go on as they have done, doctors, lawyers, and merchants, clerks and newspaper editors and publishers will soon begin to feel the effects of this free-Negro competition." Senator James Alfred Pearce stated in this Convention that "the removal of the free Negroes would deduct nearly fifty per cent from the household and agricultural labor furnished by the people of color, . . . would produce a great discomfort and inconvenience, . . . and would break up the business and destroy the property of a large number of land owners and land renters."

Contemporary opinions differ regarding the condition of the free Negroes in the middle of the nineteenth century. The historian who uses the opinion of one group of observers in order to substantiate his point of view, will have difficulty in answering the statements advanced by another group. So, frequently, only a cross-section of the free Negro population was seen and not the group. To one traveler the free Negroes were in a deplorable condition, and to another they were making progress. What was their true condition? Were they altogether unworthy of their freedom, and unable to maintain a position in the professional and mechanical fields, because of inefficiency and the competition of the whites? Only a dispassionate study of the facts can give an answer to these questions and a view of the true situation.

It is reasonable to assume at the outset that the transition from slavery to freedom, for individuals as well as the group, was not completed without creating difficulties for those who were freed. But it is unreasonable to assume, as writers have done who claim to know the Negro best, that the entire group was unable to surmount the difficulties, and that all were so hampered by so-called innate racial characteristics and by

their respective environments that as a group they might be lumped together, and judged accordingly. Several tables develop this idea. They will show the occupational grouping of free Negroes and will lead to the conclusion that the free Negroes were not so degraded a group as some writers have supposed. First, there is a comparative study of slave and free-Negro occupations. Second, there is a study of the occupations of blacks and mulattoes in typical cities. Third, there is presented a view of the occupations of the free Negroes in a Northern, a Southern and a Western city. Other occupational lists show the economic conditions in Philadelphia, New York, in the State of Massachusetts, and in other Western cities.

The comparison of the occupations of slaves and free Negroes, male and female, in a typical Southern city, Charleston, South Carolina, reveals the following results:⁹

SLAVES

1—CONTRIBUTING TO BUILDING

Bricklayers	68
Carpenters	110
Painters	9
Plasterers	16
Wharf Builders	10

Total 213

2—CONTRIBUTING TO CLOTHING

Male Female

Barbers	4	..
Bootmakers	4	..
Mantua Makers	0	4
Seamstresses	0	20
Shoemakers	2	..
Tailors	36	..
Washerwomen	0	33
Total	46	57

FREE COLORED

1—CONTRIBUTING TO BUILDING

Bricklayers	10
Carpenters	27
Painters	4

Total 41

2—CONTRIBUTING TO CLOTHING

Male Female

Barbers	14	..
Bootmakers	3	..
Drygoods Dealers	1	..
Laundresses	0	45
Mantua Makers	0	128
Milliners	7	..
Seamstresses	0	68
Shoemakers	14	..
Tailors	42	6
Upholsterers	1	..

Total 82 247

SLAVES

3—CONTRIBUTING TO FOOD

Male Female

Bakers	39	..
Butchers	6	..
Confectioners	4	..
Cooks	3	11
Fishermen	15	..
Fruiters	1	..
Hucksters	11	..
Market Dealers	6	..
Pastry Cooks	1	..
Cigarmakers	5	..
Gardeners	3	..
Total	75	30

4—CONTRIBUTING TO FURNITURE

Male Female

Cabinetmakers	8	..
Tinners	3	..
Upholsterers	1	..
Total	12	..

5—CONTRIBUTING TO HEALTH

Male Female

Nurses .....	..	2
Sextons	1	..
Total	1	2

6—CONTRIBUTING TO LOCOMOTION

Male Female

Coachmen	15	..
Coach Makers	3	..
Draymen	67	..
Saddlers	2	..
Total	87	..

7—CONTRIBUTING TO LITERATURE

Male Female

Bookbinders	3	..
Printers	5	..
Total	8	..

8—CONTRIBUTING TO NAVIGATION

Male Female

Boatmen	7	..
Sailors	43	..
Ship Carpenters	51	..
Total	101	..

FREE COLORED

3—CONTRIBUTING TO FOOD

Male Female

Bakers	1	..
Butchers	4	..
Confectioners	■	2
Cooks	16	..
Fishermen	14	..
Fruiters	1	1
Hucksters	4	..
Market Dealers	1	4
Pastry Cooks .....	..	16
Cigarmakers	1	..
Hotel-Keepers	1	1
Housekeepers .....	..	4
Tavern-Keepers	1	..
Total	46	28

4—CONTRIBUTING TO FURNITURE

Male Female

Tinners	1	..
Total	1	..

5—CONTRIBUTING TO HEALTH

Male Female

Nurses .....	..	10
Sextons	4	..
Total	4	10

6—CONTRIBUTING TO LOCOMOTION

Male Female

Coachmen	4	..
Draymen	11	..
Livery Stable Keepers..	3	..
Saddlers	1	..
Wheelwrights	1	..
Total	20	..

7—CONTRIBUTING TO MACHINERY

Male Female

Millwrights	5	..
Total	5	..

8—CONTRIBUTING TO NAVIGATION

Male Female

Seamen	1	..
Ship Carpenters	6	..
Total	7	..

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SLAVES

9—UNCLASSIFIED MECHANICS

	Male	Female
Blacksmiths	40	..
Brassfounders	1	..
Coopers	61	..
Mechanics	45	..
Total	147	..

10—UNCLASSIFIED RESIDUE OF BLACKS

	Male	Female
Apprentices	43	8
House Servants	1,888	3,384
Laborers	838	378
Porters	35	..
Stevedores	2	..
Total	2,806	3,770

FREE COLORED

9—UNCLASSIFIED MECHANICS

	Male	Female
Blacksmiths	4	..
Coopers	2	..
Coppersmiths	1	..
Mechanics	2	..
Total	9	..

10—UNCLASSIFIED RESIDUE OF BLACKS

	Male	Female
Apprentices	14	7
House Servants	9	28
Janitors	1	..
Laborers	19	2
Millers	1	..
Porters	5	..
Stevedores	1	..
Storekeepers	5	..
Woodfactors	3	..
Total	58	37

11—SUPERANNUATED AND DISABLED

	Male	Female
	38	54

11—SUPERANNUATED AND DISABLED

	Male	Female
	1	4

The city of Charleston was a thriving industrial and commercial center in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. The fine harbor made it an emporium for raw materials, especially cotton, rice and fertilizer. Slaves and free Negroes were engaged in the production of its wealth. The slaves represented forty-six occupations and the free Negroes fifty. According to the census there were 3,406 slaves whose occupations were known and 263 free Negroes whose occupations were known. The free Negroes were engaged in some occupations which were not followed by slaves. They were tavern-keepers, hotel-keepers, milliners, and storekeepers, positions which demanded the exercise of individual ability.

On the contrary, there were slave occupations which were not followed by the free Negroes. There were, for example, forty-three slaves who were sailors, sixteen who were plasterers, and seven slaves who were

boatmen, but there were no free Negroes who were engaged in these occupations. Only one free Negro was listed as a seaman. More slaves were found among house servants than among other occupations. Of the slaves there were one thousand eight hundred and eighty males and three thousand three hundred and eight-four females in the house-servant class, while there were only nine male free Negroes and twenty-eight female free Negroes in the same service. This was relatively a small number of free Negroes engaged in domestic service. The number of superannuated in both groups was about equal in proportion. As carpenters, bricklayers, barbers, hucksters, porters, draymen, and coachmen the slaves and free Negroes were equally engaged according to their numbers. As a rule in the South the occupations of slaves and free Negroes were not unlike, with the exception that the free Negroes were engaged in occupations which called for initiative and independent action.

The next table presents a view of the occupations of Free Negroes, divided into groups of blacks and mulattoes over fifteen years of age, in the cities of New York and New Orleans in 1850.¹⁰ It has commonly been stated that the mulattoes were superior to the blacks in talent and work. This statement deserves some modification. This is made evident by the following table and its conclusions:

Occupations	New York			New Orleans		
	Blacks	Mulattoes	Total	Blacks	Mulattoes	Total
Apprentices	2	...	2	...	4	4
Architects .....	...	...	...	...	1	1
Bakers	3	1	4	...	1	1
Barkeepers	2	1	3	...	2	2
Barbers	80	42	122	6	35	41
Blacksmiths .....	...	1	1	4	11	15
Boardinghouse Keepers..	15	6	21	1	17	18
Boatmen	25	3	28	5	32	37
Bookbinders .....	...	...	...	...	4	4
Brick-Makers .....	...	...	...	...	2	2
Brokers .....	...	...	...	1	8	9
Butchers	30	3	33	1	17	18
Cabinetmakers	2	17	19
Capitalists	11	4	4
Carmen	28	11	39	19	20	39

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Occupations	New York			New Orleans		
	Blacks	Mulattoes	Total	Blacks	Mulattoes	Total
Carpenters	10	2	12	56	299	355
Cigarmakers	6	2	8	13	143	156
Clerks	3	4	7	...	61	61
Collectors .....	...	...	...	...	2	2
Coachmen	96	11	107	4	6	10
Confectioners	2	...	2	...	...	...
Cooks	78	17	95	7	18	25
Coopers	7	...	7	17	26	43
Doctors	7	2	9	...	4	4
Druggists	1	2	3	...	...	...
Engineers .....	...	...	...	...	...	1
Farmers	12	12	24	...	...	...
Gardeners	5	2	7	4	5	9
Gunsmiths	1	...	1	...	4	4
Hatters	2	...	2	...	...	...
Hostlers	10	1	11	...	3	3
Hunters .....	...	...	...	4	3	7
Ink Makers	5	...	5	...	...	...
Jewelers	2	1	3	...	5	5
Laborers	957	187	1,144	71	108	179
Lawyers	4	...	4	...	...	...
Lithographers .....	...	...	...	...	1	1
Mariners	316	118	434	1	9	10
Marketmen	13	2	15	6	19	25
Masons .....	...	...	...	65	213	278
Mechanics (general)...	1	1	2	...	46	52
Merchants	2	1	3	6	58	64
Ministers	12	9	21	...	1	1
Musicians	17	7	24	...	4	4
Music Teachers .....	...	...	...	...	1	1
Overseers .....	...	...	...	1	10	11
Painters	3	1	4	4	24	28
Pedlers .....	...	...	...	2	7	9
Pilots .....	...	...	...	...	2	2
Planters .....	...	...	...	...	2	2
Printers	2	2	4	...	...	...
Sailmakers .....	...	...	...	...	2	2
Servants	612	196	808	...	...	...
Sextons	9	3	12	...	1	1
Ship Carpenters .....	...	...	...	2	4	6
Shoemakers	18	5	23	16	76	92
Stevedores .....	...	...	...	1	6	7
Stewards	34	10	44	...	9	9
Students	1	...	1	...	7	7
Tailors	18	5	23	3	79	82
Teachers	6	2	8	...	12	12
Upholsterers .....	...	...	...	1	7	8
Other Occupations.....	160	47	207	...	...	...
Total	2,617	720	3,337	329	1,463	1,792

In this table the city of New Orleans presents a larger proportion of trained occupations than does New York, and it has been taken at times for the basis of the assertion that mulattoes are superior to blacks. New Orleans contained a large mulatto population while New York did not have such a large proportion. This accounts in part for the larger percentage in trained occupations. It is a fact, also, that the

mulatto proportion in the free Negro population was greater than the proportion in the slave population in 1850. The proportion was 581 mulattoes to 1,000 blacks in the free Negro population and 83 mulattoes to 1,000 blacks in the slave population. In New Orleans, racial barriers were not such obstacles as they were in New York. In matters of labor and service, the "color line" could be crossed often without the employer, the buyer, or the one seeking a service realizing the race of the worker with whom he was dealing. On the contrary, New York practiced wide discriminations against Negroes and these served to restrict the Negro occupations. Foreign workers also gave the colored worker a greater competition here so that the occupations which were carried on by Negroes in the South were often in the hands of other races in the North.¹¹ A study has been made of the New York City Directory as a check upon the census figures. The Directory reveals the fact that there are a few discrepancies between it and the census figures as noted above. The census table gives no cabinetmakers; the Directory gives one cabinetmaker. The census gives three merchants and the Directory gives six; the census gives two confectioners and the Directory gives three. These differences serve to illustrate how imperfect the one or the other, or both of these collections may have been. In the city of New Orleans, the number of the mulatto population in the free colored population was not only higher but also more intelligent than in other cities. It is true that in this instance, pursuits requiring education have a larger proportion of mulattoes than of blacks. The occupations of the free Negroes of Boston as given in the manuscript returns for 1850 show that of 102 common laborers 17 were mulatto, and the mulatto population was about one-fifth of the whole free population.¹² A similar study of Charleston reveals the same result.¹³ In Myrtilla Miner's

School for the colored people of Washington during the decade prior to the War, it was discovered that there were differences of capacity among her pupils, "but they are in no wise governed or modified by the greater or less infusion of African blood—the blacks or comparative whites are stupid or clever, dull or quick unaffected by their respective degrees of relationship to Africa."¹⁴ So far as attainments are concerned the two groups seemed to be equal. A study of the original returns of the census demonstrates the fact that where conditions were equal for both—that is, the black and the mulatto—their attainments were equal in all classes of occupations.

This is my confident conviction, not only from facts and figures but from contacts and observations within the race. To those who study the mulatto problem from without the Negro race, there is a difficulty which is almost insuperable. This is occasioned by the irregular and uncertain method by which the report of the Censuses have denominated those persons who had perceptible traces of white blood as mulattoes and all others as blacks. The Census report tells us that "at the Census of 1850 and 1860, the terms 'black' and 'mulatto' appear not to have been defined." The same uncertainty is evident in later census enumerations. Persons who were three-fourths black and who showed traces of white blood were classified as mulattoes in 1910, and in 1890 these same persons were classified as black.¹⁵

Personal observations may vary in the same respects. Does a dark skin color preclude the presence of white blood? Are all persons denominated as black, pure-blooded Negroes? Is it not possible for white blood to manifest itself in physical changes other than in color alone? Mulatto parents have been known to produce black offsprings and black parents have produced mulatto offsprings. Where and how should the

line of demarcation be drawn between the two groups? The determination of a basis for classification is fundamental in such discussions. This has been the weakness of past discussions of the mulatto and pure Negro groups.

It is true, nevertheless, that there were mulattoes who arose to occupations and positions which the blacks did not attain. This fact was occasioned not necessarily by a difference of ability but by the conditions which made the mulatto more acceptable than the black among Americans in general.¹⁶ It was due also to the impression that the mulatto was superior in attainment to the other members of his race, and for this reason opportunities were more readily opened to him. Moreover, miscegenation had given to white fathers mulatto sons and daughters. Although of lesser importance, because of laws and public opinion, offspring of Negro fathers, slave and free, and white mothers were not unknown.¹⁷ Since American tradition did not permit the acknowledgment of this offspring, nothing could prevent the considerate parent from opening special avenues for his children. Thus many mulattoes secured superior advantages. It is common knowledge that, especially where resemblances were too evident, many of these children, with the help of an indulgent parent, were educated and sent to the Northern States, to Canada, and abroad.

E. B. Reuter asserts, in his study of the Mulatto in the United States, that the full-blooded group does not contain so large a number of superior persons as the mulatto group and that the chance of the mulatto child to develop into places of leadership is thirty-four times as great as that of the black child; and the inference is that this is due to some inherent quality of skin and blood. On the contrary, my conclusion from a study of the census returns and from an acquaintance with present day conditions, which is more real

than that of the above-named writer, is that whatever differences may occur between the two groups, they are not due to the greater or less amount of darker skin color. These opportunities are occasioned by a social system which has given the best opportunities, in slavery as well as in freedom, to colored Americans of mixed blood. The favored class among the slaves was more often the mulattoes. They became intelligent because they were favored and not per se, because of their blood. They were also more acceptable in personal associations with the whites and in general they were relatively less offensive to them. Even in slave laws distinctions were made by using the terms "Negro and Mulatto." These differences in relationship which were made by the whites were the principal causes for the dominance manifested by the mulattoes in such localities as New Orleans. But where conditions were made equal for both groups, the degree of attainment was the result of individual ability and not group ability based purely on color. The house servants and the mechanics were selected from both the mulatto and the black groups, and under generous masters they would attain equal rank in efficiency. However, in many places the mulattoes were given the house positions and therefore they appeared to be superior. Among the free Negroes and the present-day groups, the same circumstances have contributed and are still contributing to impede equal attainment. But circumstances being equal, individual merit is the test of ability among the Negroes and among the mulattoes, as among the Irish and the Irish-American, the Germans and the German-Americans, and other mixed and pure-blood groups.

The sectional differences in the occupations of the free Negro population also deserves attention. The following table permits a comparison of the occupations of free Negroes in a Northern, a Southern, and

a Western city; in the cities of Boston, Massachusetts; Charleston, South Carolina; and St. Louis, Missouri.

¹⁸ OCCUPATIONS OF NEGROES IN BOSTON, CHARLESTON, ST. LOUIS, IN 1850

Occupations	Boston (935 Males)	Charleston (1,579 Males)	St. Louis (780 Males)
Artists.....	1	0	0
Apothecaries.....	1	0	0
Barbers ¹⁹	26	17	33
Basketmakers.....	0	0	1
Blacksmiths.....	7	16	2
Boardinghouse Keepers.....	6	0	0
Boatmen.....	0	0	56
Bootmakers.....	0	10	0
Brickmakers.....	1	0	0
Bricklayers.....	1	18	0
Butchers ²⁰	0	23	3
Bookbinders.....	2	0	0
Bakers.....	15	1	1
Bootblacks.....	2	1	2
Cabinetmakers.....	0	4	0
Capstone Workers.....	1	0	0
Carters.....	0	7	0
Carpenters.....	10	122	5
Cigarmakers.....	4	2	0
Clerks.....	3	0	0
Clothiers ²¹	14	0	0
Coachmen.....	0	3	1
Confectioners ²²	0	2	0
Coopers.....	1	11	0
Chimney-Sweeps.....	1	0	0
Coppersmiths.....	1	0	0
Cotton-gin Makers.....	0	1	0
Cooks.....	9	3	36
Daguerreotypers.....	1	0	0
Doctors.....	1	0	1
Draymen.....	0	45	20
Domestics.....	15	0	0
Drummers.....	0	3	0
Engineers.....	0	6	5
Fruiterers.....	0	3	0
Farmers.....	0	34	0
Fishermen.....	0	23	0
Gardeners.....	0	0	1
Gymnasts.....	2	0	0
Glaziers.....	0	1	0
Hairdressers.....	20	6	0
Hostlers.....	3	7	0
Laundresses.....	0	3	0
Jewelers.....	1	0	0
Job Workers.....	2	0	0
Laborers.....	135	91	46
Locksmiths.....	0	2	0
Lawyers.....	1	0	0
Mariners.....	17	1	0
Marketmen.....	1	1	0
Mattress Makers.....	0	3	0
Mantua Makers.....	0	2	0
Mechanics (General).....	0	2	0
Merchants.....	1	0	0
Millwrights.....	0	14	0

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Occupations	Boston (935 Males)	Charleston (1,579 Males)	St. Louis (780 Males)
Ministers	4	0	2
Millers	0	1	0
Musicians	1	0	0
Machinists	1	0	0
Masons	1	1	0
Painters	4	11	0
Pasteboard Makers	0	1	0
Planters ²³	0	9	0
Porters	4	14	11
Pump Makers	0	1	0
Printers	1	1	0
Paperhangers	0	1	0
Pavers	1	0	0
Riggers	1	2	0
Saddlers	1	1	0
Seamstresses	0	2	0
Servants	0	7	3
Sextons	1	1	1
Shopkeepers	0	5	0
Shoemakers	7	30	0
Stewards	0	0	56
Seamen	136	0	0
Saloon-Keepers	1	0	0
Silversmiths	1	0	0
Ship Carpenters	1	1	0
Stevedores	2	3	8
Tailors	13	87	0
Tinners	0	3	2
Tenders	39	0	0
Truckmen	2	0	0
Traders	21	0	1
Traders	0	0	3
Traders	0	0	2
Tobacconists	2	0	2
Tavern-Keepers	0	1	0
Trimmers	0	2	0
Upholsterers	0	2	0
Wheelwrights	0	14	0
Waiters	26	2	16
Woodfactors	0	7	0
Whitewashers	0	1	1
Curriers	1	Hotel-Keepers 1	Firemen 20
Teachers	1	0	Mountaineers 2
Restorators	1	0	Cabinboys 25
Restaurateurs	2	0	Deckhands 17
	0	0	Rivermen 4
Total occupations known.....	582	700	384

Other names of free Negroes are given in the manuscript returns, but no occupations are assigned. The returns, as the totals show, are evidently not complete. However, as far as the figures go, they show that the free-colored males were following in the main the typical occupations of the sections in which they lived. In Boston, many were seamen, laborers, and waiters; outstanding individuals became either clerks or law-

yers, ministers or teachers. In Charleston, they were distributed through the mechanical trades of the city with a large number of tailors, shoemakers, fishermen and laborers. In St. Louis, many of them followed the river occupations, as stewards, engineers and firemen; there were several traders, but not many other skilled trades were represented.²⁴

In other cities Negroes were employed at various kinds of labor. In Washington, D. C., the majority of the free Negroes were engaged in unskilled labor, during the decade 1850-1860. There were marked increases shown in the numbers engaged in these occupations. These increases were due mainly to the movements of the Negroes from the South. In 1850, there was only one blacksmith, and in 1860 there were thirteen. There were two brickmakers in 1850 and twenty-seven in 1860; four merchants in 1850 and none in 1860; one restaurant-keeper in 1850 and eleven in 1860; no physicians in 1850 and one in 1860; five shoemakers in 1850 and fifteen in 1860.²⁵

The occupations of the Negroes in Philadelphia in 1859 were carefully listed as follows:

26 I. MECHANICAL TRADES

Bakers	4	Brush Maker	1
Baker and Brewer.....	1	Cabinetmakers	20
Barbers	248	Cabinet- and Chair-Maker, House	
Barber and Bootmaker.....	1	Painter and Glazier.....	1
Barbers and Musicians.....	6	Cake Bakers	5
Basketmakers	2	Carpenters	49
Blacksmiths	22	Carver	1
Blacksmith and Calico Stamper..	1	Carver and Gilder.....	1
Blacksmith and Shoemaker.....	1	Carver and Turner.....	1
Bonnet Presser	1	Caulkers and Gravers	3
Bookbinder and Basket Maker..	1	Chair-Maker	1
Boot- and Shoemakers.....	66	Coach Painter	1
Boot- and Shoemakers and Musi-		Confectioners and Pastry Cooks..	7
cians	2	Coopers	9
Boot- and Shoemaker, Musician		Cracker Bakers	3
and Music Teacher	1	Copper and Leecher and Dress-	
Bootmaker, Barber and Tailor..	1	maker	1
Brass Founder	1	Currier	1
Bricklayers	9	Dentists	5
Bricklayers and Plasterers.....	4	Distillers	2
Brick Makers (Moulders, Setters		Draughtsman, Sign and Orna-	
and Burners)	53	mental Painter	1
Brick Maker and Musician.....	1	Dressmakers	566

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Dress- and Shirt Makers and Milliners	2	Printers' Ink Maker	1
Dress- and Shirt Maker and Pastry Cook	1	Rectifier	1
Dyers	9	Rigger	1
Embroiderers	9	Rope Maker	1
Embroiderers and Dressmakers	3	Rope and Brick Maker	1
Embroiderer and Milliner	1	Rope and Brick Maker and Blacksmith	1
Embroiderers and Shirt Makers	2	Saddle- and Harness-Maker	12
Embroiderers and Tailoresses	2	Sailmakers	1
Embroiderers and Dress- and Shirt Makers	4	Sandpaper Maker	1
Forgemen	6	Sheet Iron Workers	4
Gardeners	2	Ship* Carpenters	5
Garment Cutters	2	Shirt and Dressmakers	70
Glove Maker	1	Shoemakers	46
Gold and Silver Pencil Finisher	1	Shoemaker and Musician	1
Hair Workers	5	Shoemaker and Carpenter	1
Hair Worker and Dressmaker	1	Sign and Ornamental Painter	1
Hatters	4	Silversmith	1
House and Ship Carpenter	1	Spectacle Maker	1
House Painters and Glaziers	7	Stationary Engineer	1
House and Sign Painters and Glaziers	3	Stereotype Moulder and Caster	1
Ink and Blacking Maker	1	Stove Finisher	1
Iron Moulder	1	Stove Maker	1
Ladies' Shoemakers	4	Sugar Refiner	1
Lampblack Maker	1	Tailors	20
Machinist	1	Tailoresses	29
Manufacturing Chemists	2	Tailoresses and Dressmakers	23
Map Mounters	2	Tailoresses, Shirt and Dress-makers and Embroiderers	2
Mason and Bricklayer	1	Tallow Chandler	1
Mason and Plasterer	1	Tanners	24
Masonic and Odd Fellow Regalia Makers	2	Tanners and Curriers	6
Millers	4	Tanner and Morocco Dresser	1
Milliners and Dressmakers	45	Tanner and Musician	1
Millwright	1	Tanners and Stationary Engineers	2
Mineral Water Maker	1	Tanner and Type Caster	1
Paper Box Makers	3	Tinsmiths	3
Paperhangers	2	Turners	3
Paper Maker	1	Umbrella Makers	2
Pastry Cooks	10	Upholsterers	2
Plasterers	14	Upholsteresses	2
Plumbers	2	Varnish Manufacturer	1
Portrait, Sign and Ornamental Painter, Teacher of Phonography, the Guitar, Singing, and Daguerreotypist	1	Vest Makers	2
Potters	2	Weavers	16
Pressman	1	Weaver and Blacksmith	1
Printer	1	Weavers and Dressmakers	2
		Wharf Builder	1
		Wheelwright	1
		Wire Workers	2
		Wrought Nail Maker	1
		Total	1,637

(An error occurs in this total which is not accounted for in the original pamphlet.)

II. OTHER OCCUPATIONS

Artists	5	Midwife	1
Assistant in Pencil Factory	1	Musicians	6
Captains of Coasting Vessels	2	Music Teachers	5
Clerks	5	Musicians and Music Teachers	4
Hat Store	1	Physicians	6
Indian Doctor	1	School Teachers	16
Livery Stablekeepers	2	Trimming Store	1
Lumber Merchants and Proprietors of Transportation Lines	3	Total	59

The occupations of the free colored population in Boston, Charleston, St. Louis, Washington and Philadelphia, show a degree of attainment which is commendable. The scope and the types represented reveal the fact that the Negroes were engaged in both skilled and unskilled labor. They were workers in many occupations which contributed to the economic betterment of the communities in which they lived. In the face of these facts, it cannot be maintained that they were altogether a degraded group. They were proscribed but they were not completely submerged.

The State of Massachusetts shows the same result. In this state, in the year 1860, the number of colored males, 15 years and above, was 3,034. In the list of occupations which follows, there are several towns not included. These towns had a colored population of 105. When this number is deducted, there is a population remaining of 2,929. Of this group, 2,398 or 78.44 per cent were returned as following some occupation. In Ward 6 of the City of Boston, the most compact Negro population was found. There were 484 males, of whom 440 or 90.91 per cent were returned with distinct occupations. This compares favorably with the percentage of the total population of which 90.60 per cent were returned with distinct occupations. The types of occupations also show the same relationship.

When the proportion to the total population is considered, the following list of occupations is worthy of any group of proscribed Americans in 1860. It is to be expected that the labor conditions among Negroes here would show good results, because Massachusetts was the "birthplace of freedom," and in this state opportunities for labor were more open to Negroes than in other states.

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27 NEGRO OCCUPATIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS IN 1860

Agents	1	Machinists	3
Apprentices	12	Mariners	279
Artists	2	Marketmen	1
Bakers	1	Masons	6
Barbers	269	Mat Makers	1
Bartenders	4	Merchants and Traders.....	37
Basketmakers	8	Messengers	2
Beer Makers	2	Millers	1
Billiard and Saloon-Keeper....	1	Morocco Dressers	1
Blacking Makers	1	Mill Operatives	3
Blacksmiths	19	Painters	6
Boarding-House Keepers.....	4	Paperhangers	5
Bookbinders	1	Paper Makers	1
Bootblacks.....	1	Peddlers	1
Brakemen	1	Photographers	1
Butchers	6	Physicians	14
Cabinetmakers	1	Piano Makers	1
Candle Makers	1	Plasterers	1
Carpenters	20	Porters	42
Carpet Cleaners	2	Printers	5
Caterers	1	Quarrymen	1
Caulkers	7	Riggers	2
Chairmakers	2	Rope Makers	1
Chimney-Sweepers	1	Sailmakers	3
Cigarmakers	1	Saloon and Restaurant Keepers	10
Clergymen	21	Servants	119
Clerks	11	Sextons	1
Clothes Cleaners	3	Shipkeepers	2
Coachmen	2	Shipwrights	4
Cooks	23	Shoemakers	73
Curriers	4	Slaters and Roofers.....	1
Daguerreotypers		Soap Makers	1
Dentists	1	Sporting-men	1
Draughtsmen	1	Stevedores	5
Drivers	1	Stewards	8
Engineers	2	Stone Cutters	6
Engravers	1	Students	2
Farmers	62	Tailors	112
Farm Laborers	216	Tanners	1
Gardeners	4	Teachers	1
Gentlemen	1	Teachers of Boxing.....	1
Guilders	2	Teamsters	34
Gymnasts	1	Upholsterers	9
Horse Trainers	1	U. S. Army.....	1
Hostlers	19	Waiters	62
Inspectors (Flour)	1	Watchmen	2
Jewelers	2	Wheelwrights	6
Jobmen	52	Whip Makers	3
Keepers	1	Whitesmiths	1
Laborers	585	Whitewashers	17
Lamp Lighters	2	Wood Sawyers	1
Lawyers	4	Yoke Makers	1
Lecturers	1		
		Total	2,296

In Cincinnati there were the following artisans among the Negroes: Three blacksmiths, four shoemakers, one tailor, sixteen or eighteen hucksters (one of whom was said to be worth \$20,000; three cabinet-makers, two owners of boot stores, three daguerreo-

typists, five master painters, one artist, two plasterers, twenty draymen, twenty dressmakers, over fifty tobacconists, over fifty seamstresses, four school teachers, and one physician (but he was regarded as a "quack"), two druggists, three master coopers, one large coal and wood yard, one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy-five barbers, five or six clergymen, five keepers of boarding houses, two keepers of billiard tables, two blacking makers, four lime-burners, and hundreds of boatmen.²⁸ It is interesting to note that it was estimated that one-half of the American seamen in 1850 were colored men. The total number of seamen was said to be 150,000 including the naval and merchant service, the whale, cod and mackerel fisheries. Twenty-five thousand were Americans, and the colored population was estimated as one-half of this number by Captain Thomas B. Sullivan. In other cities of the Middle West, Cleveland and Columbus especially, the free colored population numbered carpenters, painters, shop-keepers, etc., who were becoming more prosperous every year.²⁹ Some of these persons of color were wealthy, and as a group they were improving their economic status.

An investigation was made in 1852 into their condition in Cincinnati, Ohio. Their number was found to be 3,500. They held property which was valued at over \$500,000. Of these 3,500—the total free colored population—200 were property holders. They had 450 children in the public schools, 50 were in the higher schools and they supported 6 churches.³⁰ The taxed real estate owned by Negroes in the city of New York in 1859 amounted to \$1,400,000. In Brooklyn, it was said that the Negroes had property amounting in value from a million to a million and a half dollars. Therefore, they controlled property in New York and in Brooklyn amounting to nearly three million dollars.³¹ According to Dr. J. McCune Smith, the colored people,

during 1861, had invested, in New York and its environs, in business carried on by themselves, the following amounts: ³²

In New York City.....	\$755,000.00
In Brooklyn.....	76,200.00
In Williamsburg	4,900.00
	<hr/>
	\$836,100.00

The property owned in New Orleans in 1860 amounted to about fifteen million dollars, and in Detroit, in 1851, it amounted to about \$30,000 in a population of about 1,000 persons.³³ The Negroes of Philadelphia, in 1855, possessed \$2,655,693.00 in real and personal property; they had paid \$9,766.42 for taxes during the year and they had 108 incorporated mutual benefit societies with 9,762 members, and an invested fund of \$28,366 in the Philadelphia banks.³⁴ Nineteen thousand colored persons in this city owned \$800,000.00 worth of real property. A report of the National Convention of Colored Americans at Philadelphia in 1856 stated that the colored people of the New England States had a capital of \$2,000,000.00 employed in business, exclusive of agriculture; in Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan, \$1,500,000.00; in New York and Pennsylvania, \$3,000,000.00; and in California, \$200,000.00. In the city of New York they had \$600,000.00 deposited in the Savings Fund Institutions.³⁵ In 1859, three hundred and fifty-two free Negroes of Charleston, South Carolina, paid taxes on \$778,423.00 worth of real estate and one hundred and eight of them owned 277 slaves, and upon these they paid \$12,342.02 in taxes.³⁶

The free Negro artisans were among the leaders not only in the economic life of the colored population but also in the political and social life. The facts noted above show that as individuals many of them

had acquired wealth and positions of importance in their communities. Allowing for exaggeration by enthusiastic reporters, it is still evident that there were individual free Negroes who were advancing to important economic places among their fellows. Genius and industry among the free Negro population were closely allied in the period immediately prior to the War. An exhibition of the work of colored mechanics—The Colored American Institute for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts and Sciences—was held in Philadelphia, April 12, 1851, on the plan of the Franklin Institute. It was said to be the first of its kind. The display was described as containing beautiful specimens of work, which "would be a credit to any mechanic. The portrait painting of Videll of your city (New York) and Wilson of this (Philadelphia) are very creditable. The marine paintings by Bowser are excellent. Dutere, an undertaker, has some fine work in his line. Dr. Rock has some of the most splendid specimens of artificial teeth that we ever beheld, and his recommendations as to character and science we have never seen equalled. There is an invention by Roberts for replacing cars on the track when thrown off, which is quite ingenious. There are many creditable things, such as sofas, spring bedsteads, fancy tables, bonnets, embroidery, stoves, stereotype plates, stone-ware, saddles, etc. For the whole we think the exhibition reflects credit on the colored people."⁸⁷ *The Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette* regarded the movement as highly meritorious and stated that it deserved the encouragement of all citizens. *The Pennsylvanian* remarked that this was the first exhibition of its kind in the United States, that it reflected credit upon its management and that the articles deposited evinced "great taste and skill on the part of the artisans."⁸⁸

There were individual free Negroes who were me-

chanics and who later showed themselves to be men of genius and of influential leadership. James Forten was a sail-maker of Philadelphia, who during the early part of the nineteenth century, amassed wealth which was rated at over \$100,000.00. He patented an invention for managing sails and from this he is said to have received a competence and to have lived in comparative comfort. He conducted a manufacturing plant, employed both white and Negro labor and supplied the owners of vessels with sails and riggings. The impression which was made by Garrison's *Liberator* in Philadelphia caused Forten to enter his name in the list of twenty-five subscribers to the new paper. With his subscription, he sent fifty dollars in cash.³⁹

Henry Blair of Maryland was granted two patents for inventions, one of which was a corn planter; Roberts of Philadelphia invented a machine for lifting cars off the railway tracks; Benjamin Lewis invented a machine for picking oakum which was said to be still in use in shipbuilding in Maine a decade ago; Norbert Rillieux of Louisiana, a machinist and engineer, invented a vacuum pan for refining sugar. James McCrummell, a surgeon dentist of Philadelphia, was a manufacturer of porcelain teeth⁴⁰ and David Clay of Ohio was engaged in manufacturing plows which could be made of any size and to plow any depth, from 8 to 20 inches. He printed handbills giving a description of the plow which he was manufacturing.⁴¹ A blacksmith in Alabama, by the name of Ellis, had learned Greek and Latin and was acquiring Hebrew, so that he might be prepared as a missionary to Liberia. There were those who thought that he should remain as a preacher to his people in America.⁴² H. C. Bruce had begun life as a slave in a tobacco factory; later he became foreman of a gang of forty-two who were working on the A. & N. Railroad, and finally entered business in Washington, D. C.⁴³ James W. C. Pen-

nington began life as a slave blacksmith in Maryland, where he was known as a "first rate mechanic." He became, later in life, pastor of Presbyterian churches in Washington and in New York. He served also as President of Avery College for several years. In 1849 the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by the University of Heidelberg in Germany. He was then a delegate to the Peace Conference in Paris.⁴⁴ Frederick Douglass had worked as a ship-caulker in the Baltimore shipyards and as a printer in several printing establishments. At Rochester, New York, he conducted a paper which was known as *The North Star*, and subsequently it was called *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. *The New York Tribune*, June 28, 1851, remarked "that he is a man of marked ability no one who knows him will deny." A few months later this paper proposed to send him South as "the Champion of Free Labor," so as to answer the question whether emancipated slaves who come North "do or do not necessarily become thieves or paupers."⁴⁵

Large and profitable businesses were organized by Negroes in the East and Middle West. Stephen Smith was the principal merchant in Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. W. Whipper, a relative, was associated with him. In 1849 they had stored several thousand bushels of coal and two million two hundred and fifty thousand feet of lumber. They had twenty-two of the finest merchantmen cars on the railway from Philadelphia to Baltimore, nine thousand dollars in stock in the Columbia Bridge, and eighteen thousand dollars' worth of stock in the Columbia Bank. Mr. Smith owned fifty-eight brick houses in Philadelphia and others in Lancaster and Columbia. Henry Boyd of Cincinnati was the proprietor of an extensive bedstead manufactory. He employed from eighteen to twenty-five workmen, white and colored. Some of the finest bedsteads were said to have been made in his

establishment. They were sold throughout Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. Knight and Bell were contracting plasterers in the same city. In 1851, they had received the contract for plastering the public buildings of Hamilton County. This work required of them a ten thousand dollar security. John C. Bowers was one of the fashionable tailors of Philadelphia; and Cordovell, a tailor of New Orleans who had lived in France, had his models "frequently become the leading fashions of Paris." William H. Riley of Philadelphia was a leading gentlemen's bootmaker. James Prosser and Henry Minton were owners of popular restaurants in Philadelphia. Thomas Downing was one of the leading restaurateurs in New York. His place of business was situated near Wall Street, and it was a very profitable one. Edward V. Clark was the proprietor of a jewelry and silverware shop. Anthony Weston of Charleston, S. C., had made improvements in the threshing machine and was regarded as one of the best wheelwrights in the South. John Woodson was a master carpenter of Cincinnati who employed eight or ten hands. Samuel Wilcox, a grocer of Cincinnati, had begun as a cabin-boy on a steamboat and in 1850 paid taxes on real estate valued at \$59,000.⁴⁶

Often the free Negroes who followed the mechanical pursuits had commanding and unusual gifts, and they were forced by circumstances to follow the trades for a livelihood. J. M. Whitfield, who was known as "the Colored Poet of America," occupied a basement room as a barber. Frederick Douglass remarked "that talents so commanding, gifts so rare, poetic powers so distinguished, should be tied to the handle of a razor and buried in the precincts of a barber's shop and that he who possesses them should be consigned by the malignant arrangements of society to

occupy a position so menial, is painfully disheartening.⁴⁷

It was from such conditions as these, as well as from the operation of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, that many persons fled to Canada. Protest meetings were held among the Negroes against the seizure of fugitives. Moreover, it was reported that residents of years' standing were being sent South and returned to slavery. It was to protest against these conditions that meetings were held in several cities.⁴⁸ As far north as Canada, therefore, where many of these fugitives had taken refuge, enterprising communities were found. At Hamilton, 400 to 600 colored persons formed a part of a population of 24,000 persons. Among these there were blacksmiths, carpenters, plasterers, wheelwrights and other mechanics. In London, paupers and beggars of color could not be found. At Chatham, there were four cabinetmakers who employed others in their work, plasterers, three printers, two watch makers, two ship carpenters, two millers, four blacksmiths, one upholsterer, one saddler, six master shoemakers, six grocers, one gunsmith and one cigarmaker. A rifle was discovered in the gunsmith's shop which was described as a handsome piece of workmanship and the engraving upon it was found to be well executed.⁴⁹ On the other hand, there were fugitives who did not succeed so easily in their new environments because of the difficulties of adjustment to climate and economic conditions.

Efforts were made by the Negroes who were inhabitants of the larger cities to organize so as to protect themselves against injustice in matters regarding labor and to secure mutual improvement. An American League of Colored Laborers was formed in New York in July, 1850. The object of the organization was to promote union among the people of color in

the trades and to recommend the education of the youth of the race in agriculture, the mechanic arts and commerce. Every mechanic was urged to carry on business for himself, and the proposal was made to create a fund which would be used to assist colored mechanics to go into business for themselves.

There were seven general recommendations which were made by this body: (1) That the editors of newspapers present were to publish the news of the meeting; (2) that there should be an Executive Committee with its office in New York for the transaction of business; (3) that the communities where there were colored people should also form associations in cooperation with the Executive Committee; (4) that every association should publish its proceedings in the papers; (5) that an Industrial Fair should be held in New York City in the second week of May, 1859, the proceeds of which were to be divided so that 70 per cent should be given to the producers, and 30 per cent for carrying out the projects of the organization; (6) that colored mechanics, artisans, and agriculturists be requested to exhibit the specimens of their skill and industry at the several National Fairs; and (7) that an agent should be employed by the Executive Committee to present their views to all the colored people. The President of the organization was S. R. Ward; the Vice-Presidents were L. Woodson and Frederick Douglass.⁵⁰

Similar conventions were held in the same year. At Columbus, Ohio, January 9, 1850, a large meeting of the colored people was held. The purposes of the convention were first, to resist by all the means possible every form of oppression or proscription attempted to be imposed upon Negroes in consequence of their condition or color; second, to give earnest attention to "universal education"; and third, "to leave what are called menial occupations and aspire to mechanical,

agricultural and professional pursuits."⁵¹ In March, 1851, a convention was assembled in New York at which the improvement of the race in the mechanical arts and the education of the group were discussed. It was recommended that a Mutual Savings Bank be established among them to encourage savings and to establish a financial institution, for it was said that there was \$40,000 to \$50,000 belonging to the colored people in the Savings Banks of Wall Street.⁵²

Several conventions were held during the year 1852 at which discussions were carried on and resolutions passed regarding labor in agricultural and mechanical employments.⁵³ At the National Industrial Convention, composed of delegates of both races, which was held at Albany, colored delegates who presented credentials from auxiliary bodies were refused admittance at first by a majority vote; but later, on the presentation of their credentials, they were received.⁵⁴ On September 9, 1852, a Convention was held in Cleveland, Ohio, which was attended by over five hundred colored people. Means of improving the condition of the race and of instruction in mechanical trades were presented.⁵⁵

During the next year, there were conventions at Columbus, Ohio, and at Rochester, New York. On January 19th and 20th, about 200 persons assembled at Columbus in order to consider the formation of a society for general improvement. A resolution was passed urging the colored people to become farmers and mechanics and to prepare themselves to enter the professions.⁵⁶ An observer added that "if those who composed this convention are a sample of even the better part of this class of our population, Ohio need not be ashamed of her people of color. She has some people of paler faces who relatively have nothing to boast of on the score of sound sense, eloquence, temperance or morals." In Rochester, New York, on July

6th and 7th, 1853, one of the largest and most important conventions of pre-war times was held. A National Council of the Colored People was formed and an address was issued to the American People. Among other things, a committee on Business Relations was established which was to maintain an office for the registry of colored mechanics and artisans and to make a list of the business men who were willing to employ colored mechanics. This committee was organized to encourage the instruction of colored men and youths in the mechanical pursuits and it was expected that reports would be made concerning any avenue of business into which colored capital, skill or labor could enter. It was proposed also to establish an industrial school which was to be situated upon a farm of at least two hundred acres, and for every branch of literature taught there should be one branch of handicraft. Each pupil would be expected to occupy one-half of his time at some handicraft or in agriculture.⁵⁷ At Philadelphia, in 1854, and again in 1856, conventions were held in which similar sentiments were expressed. In the former, extremely radical statements for this period were heard, such as, "those who, without crime, are outlawed by any Government can owe no allegiance to its enactments;—that we advise all oppressed to adopt the motto, "Liberty or Death."⁵⁸ In conventions and lodge organizations the free colored population endeavored to encourage freedom for the remainder of the race which was enslaved, and to indicate the advancement in the mechanical pursuits which was necessary to the full development of the race-group.⁵⁹

It was evident that the free Negroes must be educated in the trades if they were to make places for themselves in industrial pursuits. Early in the century, schools for white mechanics had been opened in the northern states.⁶⁰ At the same time, the attention

of anti-slavery societies, Negro conventions and church organizations was turned to the cause of education for colored artisans. At the first annual meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society in Boylston Hall, Boston, Massachusetts, January 9, 1833, the announcement was made that strenuous efforts were being forwarded for the establishment of a Manual Labor School for the education of colored youth.⁶¹ At the third annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, May 10, 1833, a resolution was introduced by a Negro clergyman, Reverend T. S. Wright, stating that "it was recommended to each of the auxiliary societies to appoint a standing committee for introducing our colored brethren to the useful arts, with instructions to ascertain the number of colored people in their several districts who are desirous of learning the useful arts and especially those who are desirous of becoming regular apprentices to such mechanics as are willing to teach them trades and treat them as they do their other apprentices."⁶²

The Negroes themselves were interested in education, and in 1847 the African Methodist Episcopal Church resolved to establish a manual labor school in the west. The purpose of the school was the education of the colored youth "in all useful branches." This action led later to the establishment of Wilberforce University. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church purchased a tract of land of Gerrit Smith and proposed to establish a manual labor school in honor of Reverend Christopher Rush, one of the leaders of this Church.⁶³ The National Convention of Colored Americans which met in Philadelphia in 1856 proposed the erection of an Industrial College, for this was the surest way "of educating their people to serve other occupations than the menial ones."⁶⁴ In conventions and in church organizations the free Negroes were interesting themselves in the improve-

ment of their fellows through training, particularly in manual labor. These efforts were viewed with "high satisfaction" by those who were friendly to the race. The efforts of the Negroes to secure the benefits of education and of useful occupations for their children were highly praised.⁶⁵ The problem of industrial education for Negroes was by no means an after-the-war consideration.

About 1848, a Manual Labor School was established near Newport, Indiana. A charter was received from the State and the school was known as Union Literary Institute. Measures were being taken to raise it to a position of a college.⁶⁶ In 1852, a colonizationist made the suggestion that a manual labor school should be opened in the South so that the opportunity would be given the Negroes to prepare themselves in the literary and scientific branches and in some mechanical occupation. This should be done, it was urged, in order to prepare them for emancipation and for emigration to Liberia.⁶⁷ During the next year, Frederick Douglass drew up for Harriet Beecher Stowe a plan for "An Industrial College in which should be taught several important branches of the mechanical arts." In this plan, Mr. Douglass asserted that the Negroes must find new employments and learn new trades. He said that the members of his race must "build as well as live in houses—make as well as use furniture—construct bridges as well as pass over them." He had found already that the great need of his race group was a wider diffusion of its occupations in the mechanical field. Said he, "We need mechanics as well as ministers. We need workers in iron, clay and leather, we need orators, authors and other professional men, but they reach only a certain class and get respect for our race only in certain select circles. To live here, as we ought, we must fasten ourselves to our countrymen through their everyday

cardinal wants." Thus Frederick Douglass saw prophetically the need which was stressed later by Booker T. Washington and which found its practical expression in the establishment of Tuskegee Institute.⁶⁸ A State Convention at Syracuse, New York, August 10, 1854, pledged itself to work for the establishment of a Manual Labor College and favored holding an Agricultural Fair.⁶⁹ The Trustees of the Albany Manual Labor University had secured a tract of land of 300 acres in southern Ohio in order to furnish education to every one "without distinction of color or race."⁷⁰

Following the Convention of July 6-8, 1853, at Rochester, New York, Frederick Douglass published in his paper an editorial which attracted great attention.⁷¹ It was entitled "Learn Trades or Starve!" An appeal was made to the free Negroes themselves and their friends of the other race. As he saw it, "every day begins and ends with the impressive lesson that free Negroes must learn trades or die. The old avocations, by which colored men obtained a livelihood, are rapidly, unceasingly and inevitably passing into other hands. Every hour sees the black man elbowed out of employment by some newly arrived emigrant whose hunger and whose color are thought to give him a better title to the place; and so we believe it will continue to be until the last prop is levelled beneath us—white men are becoming house servants, cooks and stewards on vessels; at hotels, they are becoming porters, stevedores, woodsawyers, hod-carriers, brickmakers, white-washers and barbers—a few years ago and a white barber would have been a curiosity. Now their poles stand on every street. Formerly blacks were almost the exclusive coachmen in wealthy families; this is so no longer; white men are now employed and for aught we see, they fill their servile station with an obsequiousness as profound as that of the blacks. . . . Now Colored Men, what do you

mean to do, for you must do something? We tell you to go to work; and to work you must go or die; it is vain that we talk of being men. We must become valuable to society in other departments of industry than those servile ones from which we are rapidly being excluded. How shall this be done? In this manner: use every means, strain every nerve to master some important art. At present, the facilities for doing this are few—institutions of learning are more readily opened to you than the workshop. . . . In view of this state of things, we appeal to the abolitionists. What boss anti-slavery mechanic will take a black boy into his wheelwright's shop, his blacksmith's shop, his joiner's shop, his cabinet shop? Here is something practical; where are the whites and where are the blacks that will respond to it?" ⁷²

This advice had been followed by free Negroes for some time. As individuals they were making every effort to leave the lower occupational status. It is interesting to note also, that when a superior status had been secured, these individuals were not blind to the disabilities of the group.

Continuing their advance, they purchased homes, built churches and established schools. Many of them in these ways abandoned menial labor and became useful mechanics in their communities. They published books, pamphlets and newspapers. The following books, which were inspired mainly by the slavery controversy, were among those which were published in this decade:

William C. Nell—*The Services of Colored Americans in the Wars of 1776 and 1812*, 1852.

William C. Nell—*The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution*, 1855.

Peter Randolph—*Sketches of Slave Life*, 1854.

Henry Bibb—*Memoirs of a Fugitive Slave*, 1850.

Solomon Northrop—*Twelve Years a Slave*, 1853.

- Mattie Griffith—*Autobiography of a Female Slave*, 1857.
- William Wells Brown—*The Escape; or a Leap to Freedom*—A Drama, 1858.
- William Wells Brown—*Sketches of Places and People Abroad*, with a Memoir of the Author, 1855.
- Father Henson—*Story of His Life*, 1858.
- Martin R. Delany—*The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*, 1852.
- Austin Stewart—*Twenty-two Years a Slave and Forty Years a Freeman*, embracing a correspondence while President of Wilberforce Colony, London, Canada West, 1857.
- Charles Ball—*Fifty Years in Chains*, or the Life of an American Slave, 1857.
- William Green—*Narrative of Events in the Life of William Green*, written by himself, 1853.
- J. W. C. Pennington—*The Fugitive Blacksmith*, or Events in the History of James W. C. Pennington, Pastor of a Presbyterian Church, New York, 1850.
- John Thompson—*The Life of John Thompson*—A Fugitive Slave, written by himself, 1857.
- Samuel R. Ward—*Autobiography of a Fugitive Negro*; his anti-slavery labors in the United States, Canada and England.
- Daniel A. Payne—*The Pleasures*, A Volume of Poems, 1850.
- Noah Davis—*A Narrative of the Life of Rev. Noah Davis, a Colored Man*, written by himself at the age of 54, 1859.

The titles of these books show that the leaders of the free Negro population were thinking of freedom not only for themselves but for the group to which they belonged. The publication of such slave experiences helped the anti-slavery cause in great measure. It is probable that the anti-slavery societies were interested in publications of this type and that they encouraged them. However this may have been, the fact is that the Negroes who had become free were

sufficiently interested to seek to tell their own story, and the publication of these accounts by Negroes themselves assisted the cause of abolition as other publications could not do. For often in the men who wrote them there was a concrete evidence of the possibility of the attainments of the race in freedom.

A new era in the publication of newspapers was begun in this period. The anti-slavery movement had been aided by Negro speakers for some years, and for brief periods newspapers had been published since *The Freedom's Journal* of 1827, which was the first weekly paper conducted by Negroes. Owing to the lack of finances, the lives of the journals in the first half of the nineteenth century were short. When Frederick Douglass began to publish *The North Star* at Rochester, New York, in 1848, a period of active and longer life for the Negro journals was begun. Nearly all the papers were owned, edited and printed by Negroes. Some of these journals with their editors as far as may be ascertained were:

The North Star, Rochester, New York, 1848—Frederick Douglass, Editor. Its name was changed in 1850 to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. The program which it had outlined for itself was "to attack slavery in all its forms and aspects; advocate Universal Emancipation; exact the standard of morality; promote the moral and intellectual improvement of the colored people; and to hasten the day of freedom to our three million enslaved fellow-countrymen."

The Colored Man's Journal, New York, 1851, L. H. Putnam, Editor.

The Alienated American, Cleveland, Ohio, 1852, W. H. H. Day, Editor.

The Mirror of the Times, San Francisco, 1855.

The Herald of Freedom, Ohio, 1855, Peter H. Clark, Editor.

The Christian Recorder, Philadelphia, 1856, Jabez Campbell, Editor.

The Anglo-African, New York, 1859, Thomas Hamilton, Editor.

It is evident that the free Negroes, whether they were blacks or mulattoes, whether they lived in New York or New Orleans, Boston or Charleston, were at work in the interest of the advancement of themselves as individuals and as a race group. Individual free Negroes, as the urban tabulations reveal, were filling important places in the mechanical occupations, but the masses did not have the opportunity which they desired. The Convention Movement and the efforts for education, which were not of great value until another decade, were initiated with the desire of encouraging the opening of new avenues for free Negroes in the North. Nevertheless, the industry of many communities, North and South, was still dependent upon the labor of free Negroes. They had demonstrated their individual ability to rise not only in the field of the manual labor occupations, even in the midst of unfavorable circumstances, but also in the field of achievements, in the inventions, in the professions, in business organization, and in the accumulation of wealth. It is absurd, therefore, to assume that the free Negroes were a degraded lot until the Emancipation Proclamation, and that they were unable to care for themselves without protectors. There were inefficient and unworthy free Negroes, just as there are the same types in every group. But it is the historian's task to measure the worthy and the unworthy in the interest of historical truth. The historian will not join with the orator who declares that the Negroes began in 1865 with nothing except themselves, and that from this humble beginning to-day they have acquired millions of dollars' worth of property. This

statement is only a half truth. From 1850 to 1860, by their own efforts, and with the aid of sympathetic friends, individual free Negroes were attaining economic independence. The Negro-American group was made physically free by the Civil War, but individual Negroes in large numbers had freed themselves from human slavery and from economic want decades prior to this event. Of these periods the most productive was the decade immediately prior to the Civil War.

REFERENCE NOTES

1. Negro Population in the United States, 1790-1915, p. 55.
2. Frances Anne Kemble, *Journal* (1836), p. 11.
3. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, New York, 1847, p. 28.
4. Letters on the Condition of the African Race by a Southern Lady, pp. 7-8.
5. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1850, p. 130.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
7. New York Tribune, June 24, 1851; The Baltimore Sun, June 9-10, 1859.
8. New York Tribune, June 14, 1859; *Ibid.*, June 11, 1859.
9. Census of the City of Charleston for the year 1848, pp. 34-35.
10. Statistical View, Compendium of the Census of 1850, pp. 80-81.
11. Maryland Colonization Journal, Vol. II, p. 103; cf. Chapter III.
12. Mss., census enumeration of Suffolk County, Boston, Mass., 1850, in Census Office, Washington, D. C.
13. Mss., census enumeration of Charleston, South Carolina, 1850.
14. New York Tribune, March 18, 1856.
15. Negro Population, 1790-1915, p. 208.
16. Charles Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, Vol. I, p. 208.
17. E. J. McCormac, *White Servitude in Maryland*, pp. 67, 69-70; Bassett, *Slavery and Servitude in the Colony of North Carolina*, pp. 58, 67; Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland*, p. 196; Branagan, *Serious Remonstrances*, pp. 70, 71, 73, 74, 75; Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, pp. 195-196; Ballagh, *White Servitude in Virginia*, pp. 71-73; W. H. Thomas, *The American Negro*, p. 6.
18. Through the courtesy of the Director of the Census, these lists were compiled by the author directly from the original returns in manuscript of the Census of 1850 from the census enumeration of Boston, Charleston and St. Louis.
19. One owned \$3,000 worth of real estate.
20. One owned \$2,000 worth of real estate.
21. One owned \$10,000 worth of real estate.
22. One owned \$30,000 worth of real estate. Many of these persons in Charleston County were large slave-holders. See list of taxpayers for the city of Charleston for 1859.
23. One owned real estate valued at \$35,000.
24. Travelers on the Mississippi River in 1858 noticed that the crews of the boats were mainly slaves—Charles Mackay, *Life and Liberty in America*, p. 151; A. D. Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi*, p. 285; St. Louis Republican, February 7, 1854.

25. The Directories of Washington, D. C., for 1850 and 1860. The increase in the several trades may have been due to the greater efficiency which was used in the enumeration of 1860 as compared with the enumeration of 1850. Various causes may be assigned for these variations.

26. Bacon, Statistics of the Colored People of Philadelphia, pp. 13-14. The City Directory of Philadelphia for 1860 has been compared with this table as it is given by Bacon and the results show that Bacon's list of occupations follow the facts which the Directory presents.

27. Abstract of the Census of Massachusetts, 1860, pp. 356-358.

28. Clark, Condition of the Free Colored People of the United States, p. 11.

29. Ibid., p. 23.

30. Ibid., p. 10.

31. The Freedmen's Record (1865), p. 155.

32. Ibid.; Clarke, Condition of Free Colored People, p. 14.

33. Ibid., p. 156; Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1851, p. 92.

34. Bacon, Statistics of Colored People in Philadelphia, pp. 15-16; Clarke, Condition of Free Colored People, p. 14.

35. African Repository, January, 1856, Vol. XXXI, p. 8.

36. List of taxpayers for Charleston for 1859, pp. 383-405.

37. New York Tribune, April 16, 1851; Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for 1850, p. 92.

38. Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette, April 11, 1851; The Pennsylvanian, April 14, 1851.

39. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for 1850, p. 94; Baker, The Colored Inventor, p. 6; E. R. Turner, The Negro in Pennsylvania; G. W. Williams, History of the Negro Race in America, Vol. II, p. 43.

40. Delany, The Condition and Elevation of the Colored People, p. 128; Baker, The Colored Inventor, pp. 4-6; Baker, The Negro in the Field of Invention in The Journal of Negro History, Vol. II, p. 26; The New York Tribune, April 16, 1851.

41. David Clay to C. M. Clay, January 28, 1850; See Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for 1850, pp. 127-128.

42. Ibid., p. 128; Charles Lyell, Second Visit to the United States, Vol. II, pp. 71-72; this traveler discovered also that men of color could acquire large fortunes in trade, yet that there were many "thriving artisans" who remained uneducated because of the laws of the land.

43. H. C. Bruce, The New Man, 29 Years a Slave, 29 Years a Free Man, p. 157.

44. The Fugitive Blacksmith, or Events in the History of James W. C. Pennington, p. 62, ff; Delany, Condition of the Colored People, p. 113.

45. The New York Tribune, September 18, 1857; Delany, Condition of the Colored People, p. 119; Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. XXXV, p. 126; Frederick Douglass, Life and Times.

46. Delany, Condition and Elevation of the Colored People, pp. 92-109; Clarke, Condition of Free Colored People; Henry M. Minton, Early History of Negroes in Business in Philadelphia, pp. 16-18. (Read before the American Historical Society, March, 1913.)

47. The North Star, quoted by the African Repository, Vol. XXVI, p. 293.

48. The New York Tribune, October 1, 1850; The Boston Traveler, October 1, 1850; Albany Knickerbocker, October 4, 1850.

49. The New York Tribune, November 2, 1857; cf. First Annual Report presented to the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada by its Executive Committee, March, 1852; p. 16-18; First Annual Report of the Ladies' Association for the Relief of Destitute Colored Fugitives, Toronto, 1852.

50. The New York Tribune, July 3, 1850; During an election in the autumn of 1849, the colored electors met and passed a resolution that they would vote only for those who had determined to do the most for freedom, and who had pledged themselves to the principles of Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Speech and

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Free Men. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for 1850, p. 125.

51. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for 1850, p. 125.

52. The New York Tribune, March 20, 1851.

53. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, May, 1852.

54. Ibid.

55. The New York Tribune, September 13, 1852.

56. Ibid., February 9, 1853.

57. The New York Tribune, September 30, 1853; Proceedings and Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society at its Anniversary, May 10, 1854, pp. 8-9.

58. The New York Semi-Weekly Tribune, June 16, 1854; African Repository, Vol. XXXI, p. 8.

59. The New York Tribune, September 4, 1857.

60. Eighty Years of Progress, Vol. I, p. 403.

61. First Annual Report of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, Boston, 1833, p. 42; A full account of the plan for this school is given in the proceedings for 1834.

62. The American Anti-Slavery Almanac for 1837, p. 14.

63. The Non-Slaveholder, May 1, 1847.

64. Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1850, p. 124.

65. Ibid., 1849, p. 11.

66. The Pennsylvania Freeman, April 18, 1850.

67. African Repository, Vol. XXVIII, September, 1852, p. 270; Ibid., Vol. XXX, July, 1854, pp. 195-196.

68. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. XXXIII, p. 1; Frederick Douglass, by Booker T. Washington, pp. 178-181 (American Crisis Biographies).

69. The New York Semi-Weekly Tribune, August 11, 1854.

70. The New York Tribune, February 2, 1856.

71. Frederick Douglass' Paper; because of its significant statements several sections are quoted at length.

72. African Repository, Vol. XXIX, May, 1853, pp. 136-138.

CHAPTER III

THE ANTE-BELLUM ATTITUDE OF WHITE LABOR

THE free Negroes were compelled to meet the opposition of white workingmen as well as the usual difficulties of the labor situation. The opposition of their fellow white workers was manifested in acts of prejudice and discrimination, in riots, and in efforts to have the states pass laws which would impede the Negro's freedom to contract and to labor. Efforts were made to substitute white labor for Negro labor even in the Southern agricultural pursuits. There were many persons who regarded the success of this project with doubt. It was urged that whatever might be said of Negro skilled labor, the majority of Southern planters regarded the Negro as the more efficient in agricultural labor.¹ However, to other persons it was manifest that slave labor of any kind was unprofitable and baneful in its influence upon man and nature.² Out of these arguments there were proposals to employ white persons as laborers, which soon encouraged conflicts between white and black labor.

In the South, according to several observers, labor was regarded by many persons as disgraceful. The dignity of labor was not only lowered but the wages of labor and the standard of living were greatly depressed.³ It was stated that the white men could not bear the heat of the sun and therefore, if the Negroes were freed, the field work would not go on and the North would not receive any cotton. There was no use of the suggestion for hiring Negroes, for they

were "so inherently lazy" that they would not work. A contemporary described the situation in a statement that, "the poor white men will endure the evils of pinching poverty rather than engage in servile labor."⁴ A traveler remarked that "the white man that should degrade himself by working hard in his own fields or workshop would be considered not worthy of being spoken to by any respectable neighbors" and he stated that even the Negroes would despise those who did such work.⁵ Another traveler was told that there was no room for "poor white people" who labored with their hands.⁶ It is not strange, therefore, that the slave performed the manual labor of the South and that white workingmen were unwilling, as a rule, to engage in this type of work or to work at the same tasks with Negroes. Nevertheless, in the factories of Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina and the other parts of the South, the laborers of both races worked together.⁷ A few miles from Athens, Georgia, there were three cotton factories in which there were equal numbers of colored and white workers. There was discovered "no difficulty among them on account of color, the white girls working in the same room and at the same loom with the black girls; and boys of each color as well as men and women working together without apparent repugnance or objection."⁸ This situation was not general, however, for the competition which the Negroes offered in the simple industry of the South not only caused hard feeling among those who were compelled to labor with their hands, but forced many whites to emigrate to free labor states. The conditions were not exaggerated when it was stated that thousands of young white men had left Virginia for Ohio, Indiana and the Northwest.⁹ Governor Smith of Virginia found that a large emigration of whites had taken place on account of free Negro labor.¹⁰ Robert Tharin of Alabama had seen the

"Rich man's Negro" compete with the white mechanics and the preference was given to the "Rich man's Negro" in all trades. While this situation had been noticed in Charleston, Mobile and Montgomery,¹¹ it was not very general.

Moreover, New Englanders who had come South complained that their children were excluded from the handicraft occupations by the action of the planters who had the more intelligent of their slaves trained in these crafts.¹² In some places, especially in Maryland, the competition was keen and the result was that the places of the free laborer in many occupations were taken by white laborers.¹³ In South Carolina, proposals were made to establish factories not only for the increase of industry but also to supply work for the whites, whose condition was described as deplorable, and it was added that Negroes should be confined to unskilled labor.¹⁴ In the trades and in the factories, the competition between the races was rising as the middle of the century was reached, and the results were more often favorable to the whites.

Open protests were made by white skilled workers in the South against the presence of free Negroes and skilled workers. The inhabitants of Culpepper County, Virginia, petitioned the legislature, as early as 1831, to pass a law forbidding the apprenticeship of any slave to learn any trade or art. The object of this law was implicitly stated: to increase the number of white mechanics.¹⁵ The mechanics in parts of Georgia protested against the teaching of mechanical trades to slaves on the ground that mechanical occupations improved the mind and made the slave "restless and unhappy."¹⁶ The mechanics of Concord, North Carolina, protested against the action of slaveholders who used their slave mechanics and underbid them in contracts. It was alleged by the signers of the protest that free Negroes "took away business that belonged

to white laborers.”¹⁷ These protests are typical instances of the attitude of white skilled workers in the South.

On March 5, 1858, a petition was presented to the City Council of Atlanta, Georgia, stating that “We, the undersigned, would respectfully represent to your honorable body that there exists in the City of Atlanta a number of men, who in the opinion of your memorialists, are of no benefit to the city. We refer to the Negro mechanics whose masters reside in other places, and who pay nothing toward the support of the city government, and (these) Negro mechanics can afford to underbid the regular resident citizen mechanics of your city, to their great injury, and without benefit to the city in any way. We most respectfully request your honorable body to take the matter in hand, and by your action in the premises afford such protection to the resident mechanics of your city as your honorable body may deem meet in the premises, and in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.”¹⁸ There was much complain in this city concerning the employment of Negroes. Another petition was presented to the City Council which resented the presence of a Negro dentist, Roderick Badger.¹⁹ Old residents of Atlanta state that his patients included members of both races. The group of petitioners appealed for justice, “as southern citizens,” by his removal from the city. *The New York Tribune* acknowledged the receipt of a copy of an address by a Mechanics’ Association at Portsmouth, Virginia, which called upon the mechanics of the state to put an end to the teaching of mechanical trades to slaves. It was stated also that the practice of hiring out Negroes as carpenters, coopers and other mechanics degraded the white mechanics by its competition.²⁰ In various sections of the South protests were presented against the continuance of competition with the Negroes in labor. These objections

were based in part upon the fact that free Negroes would often work for less wages, or the owners of Negro workmen would underbid white workmen on contract work, or that distinctions based upon color were employed.²¹

In the North there were leaders in labor reform, who supported anti-slavery opinions and manifested sympathetic attitudes toward Negro labor.²² The New England Workingman's Association was organized in March, 1845, and at its convention a resolution was presented stating that the object of the Association was to promote happiness "without regard to party, sect, creed or color."²³ The next year at the convention at Lynn, Massachusetts, a resolution was passed, urging that "our brethren speak out in thunder tones, both as associations and individuals, and let it no longer be said that Northern laborers, while they are contending for their rights, are a standing army to keep three millions of their brethren and sisters in bondage at the point of the bayonet."²⁴ *The Anti-Slavery Standard* attempted to show Northern workmen that the Anti-Slavery Movement was fundamental in all American reforms, and of these, labor reform was only one aspect.²⁵ *The New York Tribune* carried an advertisement for the sale of Negro Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Coopers, Coopersmiths, etc., and in its editorial demanded of the Northern mechanics, if they were ready to submit to the sale of mechanics "as hogs and asses." It was pointed out that the venders of these mechanics were seeking to extend their territory in order to enslave more mechanics and tillers of the soil. These labor sales were therefore regarded as directly harmful to Northern mechanics.²⁶

The Seventh Industrial Congress was called to meet at Washington in June, 1852. The Constitution of this body, which was adopted in 1845, contained a

clause showing the purpose of the organization. This clause was issued again in the invitation for the Congress of 1852: "To establish equality, liberty and brotherhood among men of every race, to provide that the rights of men, alienable and inalienable, shall be more perfectly understood and guaranteed."²⁷ When the Congress assembled, an interesting test might have been made of the practicability of this sentiment. Colored delegates were expected from Philadelphia, but they did not appear to claim seats. There were those who would have opposed this claim but their non-appearance prevented the contest.²⁸

Another group of labor leaders, while agreeing that slavery and labor were closely related, did not join the violent attack upon slave institutions which was characteristic of the abolitionists. They professed to see that the primary cause of slavery was the degraded condition of industry and they would change this condition first.²⁹ According to their statements there were hard masters in the North who ruled their apprentices harshly just as there were cruel slave-holders in the South.³⁰ This group of leaders believed that the efforts of workingmen should be directed against the further extension of slavery, because the abolition of the institution was still remote.³¹ After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, a mass meeting in New York, on March 1, 1854, passed a resolution which stated that capitalism and land speculation had been favored by the bill, that it authorized the extension of slavery and that the meeting protested emphatically against both white and black slavery.³² Thus there were various opinions and attitudes maintained by white labor toward black labor.

Foreign immigration had brought to America thousands of workmen. From 1790 to 1820, it has been estimated that only 250,000 emigrants landed upon American shores, and that the larger number came

after the war of 1812.³³ The Irish famine of 1846-1847, the political and economic disturbances in Europe which followed in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, the French and German Revolutions of 1848, and the economic opportunities which American land and industry offered were the forces which aided the immigration of foreign peoples to America. The tide of immigration was at its height in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. During the months of January, February, March and April, 1850, there were 40,609 foreigners who were admitted; the corresponding period in 1851 showed 75,900, and the year 1852, prior to October, showed 234,258.³⁴ The immigration into the United States by decades since 1821 shows that the greater number arrived between 1851-1860:

1821-1830.....	151,824
1831-1840.....	599,125
1841-1850.....	1,713,251
1851-1860.....	2,598,214

The total number of immigrants for 1852 was 371,603, or 149 per ten thousand population. This population was exceeded within two decades by only one year, 1854, when the total number was 472,833, or 162 per ten thousand population. They were coming in such numbers by 1855 that the Commissioner of Immigration authorized the newspapers to state that labor was in abundance and that efficient men could be hired at one dollar or thereabouts per day, which was reported to be less than the hire of an able-bodied slave in the South.³⁵

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the feeling between foreigners and Negro workers seemed to have been friendly.³⁶ But when large numbers of both groups began to come together, ill feeling was engendered immediately. Particularly was this true in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities

of the East. Even the menial occupations which had been followed by Negroes were invaded in large numbers by foreigners from about 1840. These occupations included the work of porters, dock-hands, waiters, barbers, cooks and maids. While in the Eastern states these tasks were gradually coming into the hands of the immigrants, and the competition was great, in the South the Negroes remained in control of them.³⁷ Only a small portion of the immigrants made their way into the South. They seemed to avoid the sections with large Negro populations.³⁸ This was due to the attitude which the South took toward labor in general and toward Negro labor in particular, and to the superior economic opportunities of the West.

It is an erroneous point of view which would state that the entrance of foreigners into domestic service at this period was a new phenomena, and that they suddenly deprived the Negroes of their previous monopoly. The foreigners had furnished the larger number of domestics throughout the nineteenth century. The New York Society for the Encouragement of Faithful Domestics reported that between 1826 and 1830, it had received applications for employment from 3,601 Americans, 8,346 Irish, 2,574 Negroes, 642 English and 377 foreigners from other countries.³⁹ In 1845, of 10,000 to 12,000 women and girls in domestic service, 7,000 to 8,000 were Irish and 2,000 were German.⁴⁰ Domestic service as a field of labor has always attracted immigrants who came to America. Quite naturally, the Negroes felt their competition more in the periods of the largest immigration, when, in order to obtain employment, the foreigners sought all kinds of work.

Many opinions were offered concerning the value of immigrants when compared with Negroes as laborers. It was observed on the one hand that the immigrants could become useful in manufacturing and in agricul-

ture but the Negroes were incompetent, and "they were so degraded that they should not be allowed to compete with the white laborer."⁴¹ Opposite opinions were expressed repeatedly. At one time it was stated that Negroes could do twice as much work as Irishmen;⁴² and at another time that "free labor was more profitable than slave labor."⁴³ In the North the same observer discovered that the Irish were "the stupidest domestic drudges."⁴⁴ In the South, he was told that foreigners could work as effectively as Negroes, and another observer was certain that the Negroes could not stand the competition with the immigrants.⁴⁵ Opinion on the relative value of immigrant labor and Negro free labor differed. So far as Negro slave labor is concerned, the facts of history show that freemen have always been better workmen than slaves, for the enslavement of any racial group has tended to limit the efficiency by the creation of an inertia through involuntary forced labor, and this has served to impede group progress and has denied to the enslaved group the opportunity of an equal attainment with those who are free.

In many places there was an unwillingness on the part of the native whites to mix with the Negro in the performance of labor. While the foreigners were willing to take the menial places which Negroes had been filling, they were unwilling, as a rule, in the North as well as in the South, to work at the same occupations with Negroes.⁴⁶ The prejudice of race was one of the causes for this condition, and through the operation of this racial attitude the Negroes were excluded very gradually from many occupations.⁴⁷ They could not secure employment on the same terms as white laborers, and often Negro skilled laborers were forced to accept only the menial occupations which the white laborers declined. Even in Massachusetts, this situation existed. The people of color labored under many

disadvantages there, and no hope of any change seemed likely.⁴⁸ At Philadelphia, the prejudice was so unrelenting in the trades that many were compelled to abandon their pursuit of them.⁴⁹ In New York City, they were deprived of the opportunities for advancement and culture because of the prejudice of color. The editor of the *Tribune* found that the Negro was denied the rights which were "theoretically maintained" for all men, and then "we reproach him that he is not thrifty, not enlightened, not virtuous but idle, indigent and imbecile."⁵⁰ It was said that they were oppressed and degraded by a law, "as inexorable as the law of Draco . . . the prejudice of color . . . a law which no legislation could repeal."⁵¹ This opposition seemed to be made more manifest in the mechanical trades, where the Negroes were not to be tolerated either in actual work or in education in the trades. Frederick Douglass remarked that prejudice against the free colored people in the United States had shown itself nowhere in such large proportions as among mechanics.⁵² Industry and intelligence were of little importance to them. Color was the criterion of success in the mechanical pursuits, where the races were competing for work.⁵³ The degraded condition of some trades as regards Negro workmen can cause no amazement then, for it was more often pressure from without than inefficiency within which was the basic cause.⁵⁴ This idea of race exclusion pervaded the various walks of life. The schools, the places of amusement, and the conveyances of New York City and other large cities were no exception.⁵⁵

It was urged, and expected by many Negroes, that the anti-slavery organizations would aid in the opening of trades to colored workers. It was disappointing to them that in the matter of employment almost the same attitude was maintained among the anti-slavery element as among the pro-slavery ele-

ment.⁵⁶ The principle was the same and the difference was only a matter of degree. Voices were raised in demands that the heads of mechanical establishments should receive Negro apprentices, and that the prejudice on the account of color should cease.⁵⁷ In 1852, colored men had applied to the commercial houses of members of the Executive Committee of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Some of these applicants had been rejected; those who were chosen were employed in menial capacities.⁵⁸ James Forten, a wealthy Negro sailmaker of Philadelphia, complained in a series of public letters of the lack of trade opportunities which were open to Negroes, and especially was he affected by the situation as it related to his sons.⁵⁹ Protests were raised by speech and by resolution against the lack of opportunities which Negro labor faced. It was granted by many observers that there were Negroes who were equal to the whites in their attainments in mechanical and agricultural pursuits, and that they could make useful members of the community, but it was also clear that their progress was restricted by the prejudice against color.⁶⁰ This attitude could not be understood by many anti-slavery leaders, for on the one hand foreigners were welcomed "of every complexion, condition and religion from the old world, many of whom possess less Anglo-Saxon blood than do our proscribed fellow-countrymen"; and on the other hand, the free Negroes were limited in opportunity and action.⁶¹

Riots often resulted from the relations of white and Negro laborers. At Hazel River Works in Culpepper County, Virginia, one Negro was killed after a clash, and then the whites fought among themselves.⁶² In New York, the stevedores engaged in a strike for higher wages and Negroes were used in their places. At the docks of the Morgan's London Line, Negroes and Irishmen met and fought. One Negro was armed,

a crowd gathered and the Irish fled.⁶³ One month later, a few Negroes were still employed by some bosses, but their places were being filled by the former workers who were coming back to their jobs.⁶⁴ In Cincinnati and other places in Ohio, serious outbreaks occurred.⁶⁵ At Philadelphia and other places in Pennsylvania, race clashes were frequent.⁶⁶ Whenever white and colored workers gathered in numbers, riots were imminent during the middle of the nineteenth century.

In response to the opposition sentiment, laws were passed in various states for the special purpose of regulating the labor of slaves and of free Negroes. The slaves could neither make contracts, nor bargain for wages.⁶⁷ These were tasks which were arranged by the masters. Terms were made by their masters by which slaves were hired, but slaves were prohibited from hiring their own time.⁶⁸ In Georgia, any owner of slaves who permitted his slaves to hire their own time was required to pay a tax of one hundred dollars on each slave.⁶⁹ In some places the master had almost a monopoly of supplying the labor market and this system seemed to work a hardship upon free white labor.⁷⁰

Petitions were offered to the state legislature to prevent the competition of slaves and free Negroes with white mechanics. In 1831, a petition was presented to the Legislature of Virginia which requested that restrictions should be placed on the slave mechanics; and in 1833, as a result of the rumors of insurrection, statutes were passed forbidding any Negro to act as physician, teacher, or preacher.⁷¹ In the same period, Mississippi began to restrict the movement of free Negroes. In Tennessee emancipated slaves were to leave the state immediately, and in North Carolina, free Negroes were not to trade, buy or sell outside of their cities of residence.⁷² A

petition from a group of citizens of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, requested the authorities to have the Negroes removed from the state.⁷³ Another request was made that the freedom of the Negroes to enter as well as to move from the state be restricted.⁷⁴

In response to these petitions, attempts were made in many of the state legislatures of the slave-holding states to pass laws either to restrict or to remove the free Negroes.⁷⁵ The result of this opposition was the emigration of a number of free Negroes and especially the mechanics.⁷⁶ In Virginia and Georgia, per capita taxes were placed upon free Negroes. In the former one dollar and in the latter five dollars annually.⁷⁷ In Georgia during the year 1859, manumission by deed or will, or other instrument after death of the owner was forbidden.⁷⁸ It was declared unlawful for free Negroes to come into the state and any who should come were to be sold into slavery.⁷⁹

In the same state, an act had been passed on December 27, 1845, which expressly hindered the Negro worker. It was entitled, "Act to prohibit colored mechanics and masons, being slaves, or free persons of color, being mechanics or masons, from making contracts." It read that there was to be no contracting "for the direction of buildings, or for the repairs of buildings, and declared the white person or persons directly or indirectly contracting with or employing them, as well as the master employer, manager or agent for said slave, or guardian of said free person of color, authorizing or permitting the same, guilty of a misdemeanor." Section I declared: "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the state of Georgia in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that from and after the first day of February next, each and every white person who shall hereafter contract or bargain with any slave mechanic or mason or free

person of color, being a mechanic or mason, shall be liable to be indicted for a misdemeanor; and on conviction to be fined at the discretion of the court, not exceeding two hundred dollars."⁸⁰

The free Negro workers, as a group, were hampered by laws affecting their labor and movements, but there were individual Negroes who were especially protected by legislation. The laws of Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia contain instances of exceptions from the punishments and of relief from the operations of enactments. Henry Lee, a free Negro barber, was permitted to reside with his family in the city of Vicksburg because of the fact that a majority of the citizens desired it. But in order to remain, he had to exercise "his trade of barber and no other trade whatever."⁸¹ Finally the power to exempt other Negroes upon the same grounds was given to the Boards of Police of other counties.⁸² In the state of Virginia, the same attitude was manifested. But the Governor of the state said that he was reluctant to have the Negroes removed from the state because he realized that their labor was needed within the state.⁸³

Meanwhile the economic condition of the Negro population attracted the attention of the anti-slavery societies of the North, and they urged with great vigor the introduction of free labor into the South. It was evident to them that the same attitude which southern whites manifested toward colored labor could easily be transferred to the North and used against northern labor and thus, "a new principle in political ethics" would be created which would provide "that the better class have the right to drive the degraded and vicious classes hither and thither on the pretense that the latter are a nuisance to the former."⁸⁴ They would oppose such treatment not only because it was unjust to Negro laborers but because of the resulting influence upon the white laborers of the North. Another anti-

slavery group was so interested in the introduction of free labor that a plan was announced for the publication and distribution of 100,000 copies of Helper's *Impending Crisis*. By March 9, 1859, subscriptions had reached a total of \$3,177, with other amounts expected.⁸⁵ However, the propaganda of emotionalism had by this time given way to appeals to reason, and these were followed by a war which brought an end to the régime of slave labor.

Prior to the war, white labor, North and South, had adopted three attitudes toward Negro workers, (1) to openly oppose them, (2) to oppose their progress by a secret opposition which was founded upon color prejudice, and (3) to oppose the further extension of labor opportunities to free Negroes. The anti-slavery movement would destroy slavery but it neglected the more practical task of creating an economic future for the free Negro population in industry. Many Negroes were physically free and yet they were enslaved and placed in degraded economic positions by the apathy of their friends and the hostile attitude of their fellow-workers. Racial toleration in industrial occupations was rare. In the majority of places where Negroes and whites worked together, there was a sullen suspicion which soon gave opportunity to the whites to force the Negroes out of their employments either by means of economic pressure or by legislation. The conditions of Negro free labor which were brought about by the Civil War did not end the economic strife between the races. They served only to intensify the competition, and to increase the struggle between white labor and black labor in the United States. Labor had not yet learned the value of cooperation.

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CHAPTER IV

NEGRO LABOR AND THE CIVIL WAR

THE years directly preceding the Rebellion witnessed a political controversy in which a large number of important public questions were affected by the problem of slavery. The sectionalism already aroused by other political questions was fanned to white heat by the pro-slavery and the anti-slavery leaders. But when the war came, both sections refused to recognize with any great measure of frankness the importance of the slave controversy. While southern leaders would make slavery the corner-stone of their edifice, they would make southern independence the paramount issue. A few months after the outbreak of the war, it was declared, from the northern point of view, that "some speak as if abolition of slavery were the object. But putting down the gigantic conspiracy against the government is it. That and nothing else is it."¹

Northern soldiers who passed through Baltimore met several Negroes. They were supposed by the soldiers to be escaped slaves, and they were taken in custody and lodged in jail.² The slaves who sought refuge with the Union Armies in the department of the West were sent back to their owners.³ In various places, the evidence demonstrates clearly that the destruction of slavery was not the avowed purpose of the northern armies. A threatened insurrection of slaves in Maryland brought an offer from a northern General to aid in its suppression; in Kansas, it was declared that the purpose was not to interfere in any

way with the institution of slavery; in Virginia and in Kentucky, slaves were not permitted to come within the Union lines; and rumor concerning the liberation of slaves was declared by proclamation of General Burnside to be "utterly and willfully false."⁴

The slaves were equally ignorant of the real issue of the war. They went about their tasks as usual while the noise of the preparation of war went on around them.⁵ In spite of appearances, slavery was the issue which would not down. As the northern armies advanced and as the issues of the war were made clearer by events themselves, thousands of Negroes flocked to the army headquarters. In the early months of the war they were found in large numbers at Washington, Arlington Heights, Fortress Monroe and Port Royal. Problems were presented immediately by the presence of the slaves.

Neither they nor the Union Army had realized their value for war purposes. After a short period they were employed, first at Fortress Monroe, as servants and as spies in order to obtain information from the country side.⁶ Before the close of the first year of the war, General Butler declared that slaves were contraband of war and that they should work, for he found that they made "good laborers." Yet he proposed that when the owners should come into the fortress and take oath, the slaves would be hired.⁷ The Secretary of War approved the action of General Butler in putting the contrabands to work.⁸ In the sections of Virginia and South Carolina which were occupied by the Union forces, the number of contrabands increased. Along the Mississippi, the same condition was noticed.⁹ During the first year of the war they served with these armies as laborers and servants, and upon the rivers and off the coasts in the more responsible positions of stewards and pilots.¹⁰

As the war progressed, the question of what should

be done with the large group of slaves who fled from their masters and with those who were freed by the incident of war, was forcibly brought before the Union Armies. The Negroes came in such large numbers that camps had to be constructed for their use. The camps were often unhealthy places. A report was made by the President of the Western Sanitary Commission concerning conditions along the Mississippi River. At Young's Point, the sickness and death were alarming. It was estimated that during the summer, from thirty to fifty died each day. At Natchez, there was a camp of twenty-one hundred freedmen, who were housed in poorly constructed cabins. Many were sick and seventy-five had died in one day. Many were without adequate clothing or medical attention. The mortality in the camps was estimated as not less than twenty-five per cent during the last two years of the war.¹¹

The first public efforts for the relief of the freedmen were begun in February, 1862. General Thomas W. Sherman issued an order February 6, 1862, which described the condition of the freedmen and invited assistance from the public. Meetings were held in Boston, New York and Philadelphia. On February 22, 1862, the National Freedmen's Relief Association and shortly afterward the Contraband Relief Association were organized in New York and in Cincinnati respectively. This Association—the Contraband Relief—was reorganized as the Western Freedmen's Aid Commission. In 1863 the Northwestern Freedmen's Aid Commission was organized in Chicago. In the same period the National Freedmen's Relief Association of New York and the Friends' Association for the Relief of Colored Freedmen of Philadelphia sprang into activity. The government had adopted no fixed policy with reference to the contrabands, and the objects of these organizations were equally undefined, but

they were seeking to improve the conditions among them. During the year 1862, several attempts were made to unify these efforts. The Freedmen's Aid Union, which was composed of the Eastern Association, was formed, and later the American Freedmen's Aid Commission with offices in Washington, New York and Chicago, centralized the object of these organizations. The freedmen were gathered in camps; schools were established; and productive labor was encouraged through the efforts of these societies.¹²

At Port Royal, the first experiment with free labor was tried. The freedmen were put to work in the fields and in baling and rolling cotton. They were paid at the rate of one dollar for every hundred pounds of cotton which they delivered. This stimulus worked well with them. It is shown by the fact that in less than three days more than \$50,000 worth of cotton was stored in one steamboat. All the cotton was raised by Negroes and the bags were made by them. The bags of cotton were carefully marked so that in case the owner of the plantation should prove his loyalty to the federal government, he would be credited with a compensation. The report of the confidential agent showed that the product of Negro contraband labor at Port Royal, in 1861, was over a million dollars. The experiment with free labor was declared a successful one. Although in the main, the Negroes had not been accustomed to free labor, for they had labored only in the slave gang, at the "task" and under compulsion, yet they were making a beginning and learning to understand the wage system which the North knew so well.¹³ At the first anniversary of the Freedmen's Relief Association at Cooper Institute, New York City, it was reported that the receipts from cotton and other merchandise produced at Port Royal were:

February 1862 to January 1863.....	\$726,984.10
Total disbursements	304,564.98
Balance	<u>\$422,419.12</u>

The suggestion was made to lease the abandoned plantations to individuals and companies who would agree to employ the free labor system. General Banks used this plan in Louisiana.¹⁴ Ellis, Britton and Eaton of Springfield, Virginia, advertised their offer to purchase 40,000 acres of land which were controlled by the Government about Port Royal, and they agreed also to employ 10,000 emancipated Negroes at a wage of \$1.25 per day. The company promised to treat the contrabands just as agricultural laborers were treated in New England.¹⁵

During the closing months of 1861, instructions were sent from several army headquarters for the employment of Negroes in Government work. These instructions came to General Sherman at Beaufort, South Carolina. He was to take possession of the crops and to use the slaves to harvest them, and to employ them for the erection of defenses. Brigadier-General Tuttle, of the District of Cairo, was instructed to put to work such contrabands as were capable of service. General Butler at New Orleans ordered the employment of the Negroes, and the loyal planters were instructed to pay the able-bodied men \$10.00 per month with \$3.00 for clothing. A general order from Roanoke, North Carolina, provided that contrabands should be employed by the Government at a wage of \$10 per month with an allowance for clothing. Women were to receive \$4 per month with an allowance for clothing. Special agents were appointed in places occupied by the Union Armies with the authorization to seize cotton and other property and to employ the contrabands in useful service.¹⁶ At Fortress

Monroe, the wages paid to contraband labor were \$10 per month and the aggregate amount which was due them was \$31,435. It is also reported that there were 220 colored nurses who served at this post, from November, 1861, to February, 1862.¹⁷

A letter of Rev. L. C. Lockwood, who was in the service of the American Association, stated that the Negroes at Fortress Monroe were "considered superior for most descriptions of work to any other class of laborers. They do pretty much everything that white laborers are expected to perform and are coming to be preferred not only as quite as productive, but as more cheerful and willing."¹⁸

General Grant in charge of the Department of the West appointed a General Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents of Negro Affairs after the fall of Vicksburg. The same supervision was ordered in Virginia and North Carolina. A letter of the General Superintendent under General Grant to Mr. Levi Coffin in England states that there were 113,650 persons under supervision and that there were 41,150 engaged in service as soldiers, laundresses, cooks, officers' servants, and laborers in the various staff departments. It was reported that 72,500 were living in the cities, the plantations, and the freedmen's villages. Of this number 62,300 were as "self-supporting" as any industrial class. They were planters, mechanics, barbers, hackmen, draymen, hired laborers and they conducted enterprises for themselves; 10,200 received subsistence from the government. Over 100,000 acres of cotton were under cultivation. Some of these acreages included plantations of 300-400 acres, which were leased and cultivated on the responsibility of the contrabands alone. Many forms of industry were practised among them. Some of these persons received rations from the government, but there were many others who industriously contributed to their own

support.¹⁹ In this region, common laborers received as wages \$5.00 per month, mechanics \$8.00 per month, and the best mechanics earned \$12.00 to \$15.00 per month.²⁰

A report from General Butler at New Orleans, November 28, 1862, stated that the cultivation of sugar with free labor was "succeeding admirably." The government agent had reported that with free labor a hogshead and a half more of sugar was made per day than with slave labor. The same Negroes and the same machinery were used. The first barrel of sugar which was said to have been made by free labor was forwarded to President Lincoln. The Negroes of this city having been informed that they were free, had gone "willingly to work and worked with a will." It was General Butler's opinion from this experience that Negro labor could be as well governed and could be made as profitable in a state of freedom as in slavery.²¹

When the Union Armies entered hostile territory, it was necessary to send the confiscated slaves to the camps provided for them. Passes and special orders were necessary. Such an order may be noted in the following, which was issued from the Army of the Southwest, Helena, Arkansas, August 15, 1862:²²

"Special Order No.

.....Colored, formerly slaves, having by direction of, owner, been engaged in the rebel service, . . . hereby confiscated as being contraband of war, and not being needed in the public service . . . permitted to pass the pickets of this command northward, and . . . forever emancipated from a master who permitted . . . to assist in an attempt to break up the government and laws of our country.

By order of Major General Curtis,
A. Hodge,
Lieutenant and Aide-de-Camp."

As the Union Armies advanced and the slaves passed northward, it was soon common knowledge that the slaves were the basis of southern resistance.²³ Without them the Southern Confederacy could have had no economic foundation. Slave labor was used in raising foodstuffs, in plantation labor, in ordinary town labor and in military labor. Thus a proportion of the white population was freed for the army. The slaves formed, more largely than any other group, the real producing class for the lower southern states.

Through the editorial columns of *The New York Tribune*, Horace Greeley endeavored, from the middle of August, 1861, to create a sentiment for the emancipation of the slaves.²⁴ Not only for the good which might accrue to the slaves themselves, but also for the cause of the Union. Moreover, he would add that emancipation would be profitable to northern business, for the merchants and manufacturers of the North would be able to sell more articles in the South if the slaves were free, for they would then "live and dress better"²⁵ and their demands would be more numerous.

On May 26, 1862, a resolution was introduced in the Senate by Senator Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts, concerning slave labor and the war. The resolution declared that "in the prosecution of the present war for the suppression of a wicked rebellion, the time has come for the Government of the United States to appeal to the loyalty of the whole people everywhere, but especially in the Rebel districts, and to invite all, without distinction of labor or class, to make their loyalty manifest by ceasing to fight or labor for the Rebels, and also by rendering every assistance in their power to the cause of the constitution and the Union, according to their ability, whether by arms or labor or information in any other way."²⁶ Resolutions and memorials were introduced frequently dur-

ing the thirty-seventh Congress calling for the emancipation of the slaves, and on August 11, 1862, *The New York Tribune* made the suggestion for the issuance of a proclamation of emancipation by the President. This was urged because it would give the needed support to the armies in the field.

The question of emancipating the slaves introduced the problems of the Conflict of Negro Labor with White Labor. The North, it was said, would witness a competition which would arise between the white laborers and the Negroes who were freed. The latter would naturally work for less than the former, and the price of labor would fall. In the end, white laborers would feel the pressure keenly.²⁷ On the other hand, it was denied that emancipation would ruin the white laborer. The Continent would be broad enough for all—"the American, the Irishman, the German, the African." The Negro, it was urged, would take the lowest social place and would thereby relieve the whites from the drudgery of menial labor and open to them the highest rewards of industry.²⁸ Honorable Samuel Hooper who spoke before the Republicans of ward nine in Boston, presented another point of view. He quoted the report of the Superintendent of Free Labor in Louisiana which revealed the wages paid to Negro workers there. These wages with clothing, etc., were said to be better, as a whole, than the wages which were paid to farm hands in the North. It could be inferred from this condition, he added, that the free states would not be crowded with the freedmen.²⁹

The workingmen of the North furnished a large bulk of the Union Army. They enlisted from the first call and served in all periods of the war.³⁰ The northern laborers who remained at work received good wages for their labor.³¹ There were others who were without work and in want. Three remedies were sug-

gested for this condition: first, the freedom of the Public lands to all; second, a more practical education, so as to make every boy a good farmer or a mechanic first, and third, the organization of a labor exchange.³²

The workingmen of the South who did not enlist felt the competition of the slaves during the opening years of the war, and it was said that often the slave laborer was preferred to them.³³ In Mississippi during 1861, many white laborers had no work and there was actual suffering among them. Influential planters who owned Negro mechanics obtained work for them by hiring them to others. This situation prevented the white mechanics from securing work and it occasioned bitter feeling between the whites and Negroes.³⁴

During the first year of the war, there was great fear of insurrections among the slaves. In Virginia, South Carolina and Louisiana, there were evidences of outbreaks and rumors of many others.³⁵ The real danger of insurrection during the war was decreased by the constant escape of the boldest spirits among the Negroes to the northern states. A typical instance of this type was the action of William F. Tillman, a colored steward on board the brig, *S. J. Waring*, which carried a cargo valued at \$100,000. He had succeeded, by leading a revolt, in freeing the vessel from the confederates who had seized it, and with the aid of a German and a Canadian had brought the vessel into port at New York.³⁶ This action brought up the question of whether a Negro could be master of a vessel. In the Official Opinions of the Attorney-General for 1862, it was declared that a free colored man if born in the United States was a citizen of the United States and that he was competent to be master of a vessel engaged in the coasting trade.

The great mass of the slaves, however, had been made docile through the education of the slave régime and the superior planter attitude. The result was

that the average Negro slave was the most tractable of humans. History reveals very few instances of united movements by enslaved groups in order to obtain their freedom. Minor outbreaks might occur in some places, but the danger of a general conspiracy was small. Nevertheless, an effort was made to plan a general insurrection throughout the entire South. This plan was proposed by a "Mr. Montgomery" of Washington, D. C., in a letter to General Foster at New Berne, N. C. The letter, dated May 12, 1863, was found on board a captured mail steamer in the Chesapeake Bay. It was planned to induce the slaves to make a concerted move for freedom on August 1, 1863. It was stated that "no blood was to be shed, except in self-defense." One or more of the intelligent contrabands were to be selected to go into the interior and communicate the plan to the slaves. This method was to be followed over the entire South. Governor Vance of North Carolina sent the letter containing the plan of the plot to Jefferson Davis. He advised the Confederate Secretary of War, and a few days later a report was received which stated that plans were complete to prevent any such outbreak.³⁷

Plans for insurrections continued to miscarry, but the conditions under which the slaves labored caused much dissatisfaction among them. At times, the result was protest from the free Negro population. At other times, the result was migration. On March 4, 1862, a group of free colored men was sent into the interior of Louisiana to inquire into the condition of the Negroes and to report their findings with recommendations concerning desirable labor conditions. They recommended: first, that their families should not be separated; second, that flogging should cease; third, that their children should be educated; fourth, that they should not be compelled to labor where they were abused.³⁸ During the period immediately prior

to the war, the escaped slaves and the free Negroes continued to migrate toward the North. In January, 1861, several steamers arrived in New York from Charleston, South Carolina. On board these vessels there were free Negroes who seemed to be intelligent persons and who were said to be rapidly coming to the conclusion that, "Safety was to be found only in getting out of reach of the slave power." It was estimated that no less than 2,000 had left the state of South Carolina since the threatening war rumors. The causes for this exodus were the restrictions of an economic and legal nature which were placed upon free persons of color in the South. In addition to the restrictions and the prospects of war, rumors arose that the property of the free Negroes would be seized by the Confederacy and that free Negroes would be sold into slavery.³⁹ In Georgia and South Carolina taxes and various restrictions were placed upon all free Negroes. Laws were passed also preventing the entrance of free Negroes into the states.⁴⁰ Even in free states, the migrants were not unmolested. Frequently reports came of the necessity for their removal farther North. During the early part of April, 1861, it was reported that 300 free colored persons had left Chicago for Canada, owing to the activity of the marshals who were aiding in the operation of the fugitive slave laws. This action was taken in spite of the fact that these persons were said to be maintaining themselves in useful occupations.⁴¹

On the other hand, there were free Negroes in the South who were compelled by circumstances to submit to slave conditions. Oppressive laws limited the actions and movements of the free Negroes, and economic pressure proscribed their activity in greater detail. For these reasons, there were those who submitted to slavery in order that they might obtain a secure means of livelihood. Elmira Matthews, a free

person of color, on December 17, 1861, was authorized by an act of the Legislature of the State of Georgia to sell herself into perpetual slavery to John Doberty. The sole consideration was the obligation which the master assumed of feeding, clothing and protecting her.⁴² In the same state, John Miller, another free person of color, on December 9, 1862, was authorized to become a slave of E. S. Sims for life.⁴³ These instances are rare, but they are indicative of the presence of individuals who were forced to submit to the conditions of human bondage as a way to a living rather than to struggle almost hopelessly for an independent existence. Perhaps this indicated also the presence of slave owners who used humane methods with slaves, for otherwise the slaves would not have been willing to submit themselves to voluntary bondage.

The larger number, however, chose migration to the North as a solution for their economic difficulty. As the Negroes came into the northern industrial centers, competition between the races began. This condition gave rise in places to open protest and riot, as in the preceding decade. The Irish longshoremen seemed to take special offence, and a racial antipathy was engendered which often passed to bloodshed. At Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, New York and other places, riots occurred. Laborers upon the Camden and Amboy Railroad began a strike for an increase in wages, and when colored workers were introduced in their places there was renewed excitement.⁴⁴ Irish laborers in Cincinnati, Ohio; Evansville, Indiana; Toledo, Ohio; and other cities, combined to drive the Negroes from their employment. The movement began in Cincinnati where Negro stevedores were employed in the place of Irish workers. *The Cincinnati Inquirer* and *The Philadelphia Evening Journal* expressed great alarm at the condition which

was being introduced of employing colored workers to take the place of white workers. In New York during 1862, Negro longshoremen who took the places of discharged white longshoremen were assaulted and the police were compelled to intervene.⁴⁵ In the same city, the colored women and children who worked in a tobacco factory were attacked by a mob in August, 1862.⁴⁶ At Buffalo, on July 6, a riot occurred between Irish workers along the wharves and the Negroes. An altercation between individuals led to a general fight. A mob of white laborers turned upon the Negroes, fired a tenement called "Dug's Dive," where many lived and forced the Negro laborers to leave the wharves. The Mayor addressed the crowd and with the aid of the police order was restored.⁴⁷ The Negro laborers were so hard pressed that one editor frankly attacked the attitude of the other races and stated that, "the Negroes must have employment or starve or steal. They have a right to earn their bread by labor, in appropriate spheres, and have a right to protection."⁴⁸ During the month of July, 1862, there were many disturbances in New York City. The Conscription Act of March 3, 1863, was in operation and it pressed heavily upon mechanics and laborers. This condition gave rise to the Draft Riots. The rioting was begun in New York on July 13. Almost immediately other objects than conscription were attacked. The riot was directed "against Negroes, against property, fine houses, good apparel, against all the conserving influences and elements of society."⁴⁹

One is not compelled to look very far in order to see how the Draft Riots might have affected the Negro population. At the outbreak of the riots it had been asserted by one newspaper that "this is a nigger war" and it had been asked frankly, "why Lincoln did not put Negroes front."⁵⁰ The Negroes were hunted down and mistreated not only because they were involved in

the cause of the war, but because of the labor competition with the whites, and especially with the Irish in the menial forms of labor. The residences, barber-shops, business houses, boarding-houses and the Colored Orphan Asylum on Fifth Avenue between Forty-third and Forty-fourth Streets (a three-story brick building, which was valued at \$35,000), were burned and destroyed.⁵¹ The Negroes of Weekville, a suburb of New York, believing that an attack was to be made upon them, armed themselves, organized in groups to resist the mob, and made application to the sheriff for more arms so that they might protect themselves.⁵² The riots so affected the living conditions among the colored population of New York that a Relief Committee was established with an office located on Fourth Street. By August 10, 1863, the sum of \$38,696 had been collected as a Relief Fund. This office was kept open as an employment office after the sufferers had been relieved.⁵³

Not only was such an office necessary, but some effort was needed in order to encourage the opening of avenues of employment to colored workers in the North. In 1862, at a meeting of the National Freedmen's Association in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, Henry Ward Beecher declared that the opportunities for Negro labor in the city of New York were very few. There were no foundries, machine-shops, ship-yards, cabinet-shops or other remunerative employment which the Negro could enter. He said, "The only chance for the colored man North nowadays is to wait and shave, and they are being driven from that as fast as possible."⁵⁴ This association declared that its purpose was to aid in creating new opportunities for him. Individual successes were being made in northern centers, but the group was proscribed by limitations which were in the main racial, and it was this condition which liberal thinkers sought to remedy.

Inefficiency was often declared to be the cause for the lack of the employment of Negroes in the North and in the South. But as it has been noted above, such skilled work as was needed on the plantation was done by Negroes and with the beginning of the war Negroes were employed in the operation of engines and gins at the army camps.⁵⁵ A cotton mill at Rocky Mount Hill, N. C., was continued from 1849 to 1863, and it was conducted partly by white labor and partly by black labor. Finally, for various reasons, the former was used entirely.⁵⁶ In 1861 an attempt was made to establish a shoe factory in South Carolina. It was said to have failed because of the lack of experienced Negro workers and of executive ability on the part of its initiators.⁵⁷ The Secretary of the Interior suggested that a large number of Negroes should be employed in the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad. Three hundred were already employed in this work.⁵⁸

Captain Horace James, Superintendent of Negro affairs in North Carolina, rendered a report of the economic condition of the Negroes of Newberne as to earnings during the year 1864. Three hundred and five persons made returns in response to his request. A gross income of \$151,562 was reported. The larger incomes reported were:

\$ 500-\$1,000	110
1,000- 2,000	18
2,000- 3,000	4
3,000- 4,000	2

The largest income which was reported was \$3,150 from one who was engaged in the turpentine business. The average income was \$496.92.

Typical occupations and incomes were:⁵⁹

George Hargate, Turpentine Farmer.....	\$3,150
Ned Huggins, Carpenter and Grocer.....	3,000
E. H. Hill, Missionary and Teacher.....	2,000
W. A. Ives, Carpenter and Grocer.....	2,400
George Gordon, Turpentine.....	1,500
Adam Hymen, Turpentine.....	1,300
Samuel Collins, Drygoods and Groceries.....	1,200
Benj. Whitefield, Grocery and Eating House..	1,500
Hasty Chadwick, Turpentine.....	1,000
Limber Lewis, Staves, Wood and Shingles....	1,500
Sylvester Mackay, Undertaker.....	1,000
Charles Bryan, Carter.....	1,000
John H. Heath, Shoemaker.....	1,000
William Long, Lumber.....	1,200
John Bryan, Cotton Farming.....	1,100
Hogan Canedy, Cooper and Tar Maker.....	1,000
Danegy Heath, Grocer and Baker.....	1,500
George Physic, Grocer.....	1,500

The average annual income for each occupation was: ⁶⁰

Barbers	\$675
Blacksmiths	468
Masons	402
Carpenters	510
Grocers	678
Coopers	418
Turpentine Farmers	446

In addition to these examples of thrift, there was another class of persons, which may be found in any group: the indolent and shiftless. These were the dependents, and it was this group which was seen more often by travelers and southern writers. The progressive, thrifty and industrious group was neglected, and views have been given only of the indolent ne'er-dowells who were seen about the streets and camps, and who were engaged in unskilled occupations. However, white camp followers were often as indolent and as

shiftless as colored camp followers, and they both gave considerable trouble to the armies and to the native population.⁶¹

The early iron industry of Alabama employed Negro workers. The Wares, of Birmingham, selected the most intelligent of their slaves to do this work and they were continued at these tasks after they were free. John E. Ware wrote of the Negro workers, "Berry was trained to the duties of foundryman, Charles was skilled as a collier, Anderson as furnace-engineer, Clark as chief coal teamster, others as top-fillers and keepers, and Obediah was given the task of marketing and keeping in repair the white baskets necessary to handle the charcoal. These were duties in lines of work very unusual for Negroes in that day when agricultural labor claimed the great body of them. They proved faithful and efficient in these places of responsibility and when they became free after the war, their knowledge of such work stood them well in hand, and they easily secured remunerative employment with furnace operators."⁶² Ex-Senator Wright of Indiana tells of a southern woman who owned 500 slaves. During the war they were given the opportunity to cultivate the farm on shares. She stated that 200 of them made more money for her than 500 in slavery.⁶³

At periods during the war the colonization of the freedmen had been proposed. In the minds of some political leaders, labor would be aided by Negro colonization. Lincoln favored the movement in public utterances.⁶⁴ As early as 1852 and again in the Lincoln-Douglass debates, the same position was affirmed.⁶⁵ In his first message, December 3, 1861, this policy was advocated.⁶⁶ In response, Congress provided on April 16, 1862, that such persons who were released from service or labor in the District of Columbia might emigrate if they desired, and they were to be assisted

by an expenditure not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars.⁶⁷ In August, 1862, Senator S. C. Pomeroy published through the newspapers a proposal for the colonization of Negroes in Central America. This proposal was addressed to the free colored people in the United States, and especially to the mechanics and laborers.⁶⁸ Opposition to the project developed rapidly. A short time after this, Horace Greeley declared that the banishment of 3,000,000 Negroes from America would be "more disastrous to us than the expulsion of the Huguenots from France. The labor of these people cannot be spared."⁶⁹

In the second annual message, December 1, 1862, President Lincoln again proposed colonization.⁷⁰ In this message not only the effects upon the Negro but also the good results to white labor from this project were presented. He said, "Is it true then that colored people can displace any more white labor by being free than by remaining slaves? If they stay in their old places they jostle no white laborers; if they leave their old places they leave them open to white laborers. Logically then there is neither more nor less of it. Emancipation even without deportation would probably enhance the wages of white labor and very surely would not reduce them. . . . Reduce the supply of black labor by colonizing the black laborer out of the country and by precisely so much you increase the demand for, and wages of, white labor." In response to this appeal, measures were passed by Congress to assist in the colonization of the Negro population. The Island of A'vache in the West Indies was chosen by the President.⁷¹ A Haytian Bureau of Immigration was also opened in New York with James Redpath as agent. Arrangements were made for monthly sailings from Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Every emigrant had to provide himself with a hoe, axe and spade. By the end of the first year of operation this

agency had sent over 1,500 of the farming class.⁷² However, colonization as a practical measure had little influence upon the Negro labor questions during the war.

Negroes were employed as laborers, mechanics, and soldiers in the armies of the North and of the South. In the southern army, they were teamsters and helpers, mechanics and laborers in army service of various kinds.⁷³ They built fortifications in Tennessee, in Mississippi, in Alabama, and at Savannah, at Manassas, at Bull Run, at Charleston, Wilmington, New Orleans, Memphis, Richmond and at various other places in the South.⁷⁴ The Legislature of Florida in 1862 authorized the impressment of slaves, if so authorized by the Confederate Government. The owners were to be compensated by wages not to exceed twenty-five dollars per month.⁷⁵ The General Assembly of South Carolina on December 18, 1862, passed an act to organize and supply Negro labor for Coast Defense. The state was divided into districts, and the Governor, on receiving requisitions from the Confederate Government, was expected to call upon each district for its quota. The pay of each slave was eleven dollars per month. The period of service was one month and until relieved by a new levy.⁷⁶ This act was amended on February 6, 1863, and on April 10, 1863.⁷⁷ In 1864, an act was passed to organize a force of slaves, ages 18-50, for labor purposes. This force was not to exceed one-tenth part of the slaves.⁷⁸ They were to serve for twelve months and to be subject to the rights of the owners at the end of three months. The wages were again fixed at eleven dollars per month. In the same year, able bodied, free colored persons between the ages of 16 and 50 years were declared subject to impressment, for the purpose of laboring, for the same term as slaves. The only difference in the requisitions for slave and free was that the latter might have the

privilege of furnishing a substitute.⁷⁹ The legislature of Tennessee agreed, June 28, 1861, to receive into the military service free male Negroes between the ages of 15-50.⁸⁰

Several southern states continued the exclusion of free Negroes from the confines of their territories but at the outbreak of the war legislation was enacted in a few of them granting exceptions. In South Carolina, exemption was granted to free persons of color who, having been residents of the state, had left it "in any occupation or employment of a military character, or in the employment of any person connected with the military service of this state or the Confederate States."⁸¹ The same measure was passed in Georgia during the session, November-December, 1861.⁸² A short time before, the General Assembly of Georgia had passed a measure providing that no slave was permitted to labor or transact business for himself, nor rent any house, room, store or land on his own account.⁸³

The impressment of slaves for laboring purposes appeared to work great hardship upon the masters who were dependent upon this labor for support. Efforts were made by the Confederate Government to remedy this situation by the passing of protective measures.⁸⁴ The next year, an impressment of 20,000 for menial service was ordered, and in November, 1864, Jefferson Davis recommended that this number should be increased to 40,000.⁸⁵ The calls for slave laborers were so frequent in 1864 and in 1865 that strenuous objections were raised to the continuance of the policy.⁸⁶ The hiring of slaves by annual contracts placed them outside the control of the army and their masters, and it was often difficult to secure their labor even under impressments.⁸⁷

Free Negroes were found in the southern local companies as soldiers as well as laborers at New Orleans,

Charleston, Nashville, Port Royal, Bowling Green, Memphis and Lynchburg.⁸⁸ One instance of the actual fighting of Negroes on the Confederate side has been reported. It was stated that seven companies of the 20th New York German Rifles left Newport News on a reconnoissance. After a few miles' journey, one company was detached and sent forward. They were met by 600 Confederate Cavalry. As the group of Union soldiers advanced, the Cavalry deployed and unmasked about 700 Negro infantrymen, armed with muskets. They opened fire, it is reported, and wounded two lieutenants and two privates.⁸⁹ No official confirmation of this incident could be secured, but such an incident is not altogether improbable. Agitation finally led to the adoption of the act of March 13, 1865, for the employment by the Confederate Government of Negro soldiers. While there were those who thought that the Confederacy could be saved by this measure, others saw in it the ruin of the government. One writer stated that he knew that 10,000 Negro soldiers could be secured for the Confederate Army and that he "would be willing almost to risk the fate of the South upon such an encounter in an open field." Another recognized the fact that it would have two results: general emancipation and a preference for the United States service, or peonage.⁹⁰

As we have noted above, northern generals did not have a definite policy regarding the presence and the use of Negroes for military purposes. Their employment depended at first upon the convictions of the individual leaders. When General B. F. Butler ordered Brigadier-General J. W. Phelps to use the contrabands in the cutting down of trees, the latter replied that he was willing to prepare African regiments for the defense of the government but not "to become a mere slave driver." Thereupon General Phelps sent in his resignation.⁹¹ Nevertheless, as laborers, teamsters,

and mechanics, the Union Army was assisted by the Negroes in North Carolina, Ohio, Missouri, Kentucky, and in all sections of the South, especially after the first year of the war.⁹²

An effort was made to secure information concerning the number of Negroes and the type of work which was carried on in the Quartermaster's Department of the northern armies. A search of the files showed that there was no immediately practical method by which this information could be compiled from the available records. Among the thousands of reports which were made to the office there was often nothing to indicate the race of the employees. Therefore authentic information of a specific character upon this type of employment could not be obtained from the official sources.

As soon as the Union Armies made their appearances, the Negroes demonstrated their attitudes by work, by enlistments and by acts of loyalty. At the ninetieth anniversary of the organization of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, in 1866, Rev. A. M. Gilbert, of Kentucky, said: "This war has been full of records of Negro agency in our behalf. Negro guides have piloted our forces; Negro sympathy cared for our prisoners escaping from the enemy; Negro hands have made for us naval captures; Negro spies brought us valuable information. The Negroes of the South have been in sympathy with us from the beginning, and have always hailed the approach of our flag with the wildest demonstrations of joy."⁹³ Major-General Mitchell stated in May, 1862, that in Alabama "the Negroes are our only friends, and in two instances I owe my own safety to their faithfulness."⁹⁴ When General Butler entered New Orleans in 1862 he found that the free colored people had refused to leave the city with the Confederates, and thereupon he issued a proclamation expressing his confidence in their loyalty and calling

upon those who had organized to continue their organization until they received further orders.⁹⁵

In 1862, General Burnside reported to Secretary Stanton that he had decided to employ all Negroes as far as possible within the army lines and to return none to their owners.⁹⁶ On August 25, 1862, Brigadier-General Saxton was ordered by the Secretary of War to enroll and organize Colored Volunteer Companies not exceeding 5,000 for laboring purposes, for service during the period of the war. They were to receive wages of \$5.00 per month for common labor and \$8.00 for mechanical and skilled labor. Another group of 5,000 was ordered to be armed, equipped and instructed. This procedure was followed in order to reduce the enemy's laboring force.⁹⁷

The Negroes served in large numbers not only as laborers but also as soldiers with the Union Army.⁹⁸ An official statement from the War Department gives the number as 178,985.⁹⁹ Including the colored state organizations, the number of colored organizations was as follows:

Infantry Regiments.....	140
Cavalry Regiments	7
Heavy Artillery Regiments.....	12
Light Artillery Regiments.....	1
Separate Companies and Batteries.....	11

The Negroes came in large numbers, following the appeals from men of both races.¹⁰⁰ The first order to raise three-year men in loyal states and to include persons of African descent was issued January 20, 1863.¹⁰¹ They served creditably from the first and they compared favorably in efficiency with other soldiers in spite of great obstacles.¹⁰² As soldiers and as laborers, the Negroes rendered great service to the northern armies. The incidents of the war as well as the results changed the economic status of the Negroes in America. They

did not have their freedom given to them without efforts on their own part. They seemed to understand, after a brief period, the axiom that they who would be free, must strike the blow themselves. They worked and fought for their own freedom. Negroes were laboring not only in military service, but, in spite of hindrances, in all classes of occupations during the War for Southern Independence.

The relation between Negro free labor and the war—between occupations and military service—may be noted from the following list of trades and occupations of the 55th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers. This was not regarded as a picked regiment and its character does not differ materially from the 54th Regiment and other northern colored troops.¹⁰⁸

104 TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS

(55th Massachusetts Infantry)

Farmers	596	Firemen	2
Laborers	74	Coppersmith	1
Barbers	34	Machinist	1
Waiters	50	Rope Maker	1
Cooks	27	Fisherman	1
Blacksmiths	21	Tinker	1
Painters	7	Harness Maker	1
Teamsters	27	Caulker	1
Grooms	7	Glass Grinder	1
Hostlers	9	Musician	1
Coachmen	3	Moulder	1
Coopers	5	Confectioner	1
Sailors	20	Tobacco Worker	1
Butchers	8	Clergyman	1
Iron Workers	2	Broom Maker	1
Shoemakers	9	Baker	1
Masons and Plasterers	16	Student	1
Brickmakers	3	Whitewashers	2
Stone Cutters	2	Printers	3
Boatmen	6	Teachers	6
Clerks	5	Porters	5
Carpenters	6	Wagon Makers	2
Millers	2	Engineers	3

REFERENCE NOTES

1. The New York Tribune, July 7, 1861.
2. The Baltimore American, June 22, 1861.
3. Off. Reds. Rebell. Series I, Vol. VIII, p. 370; Moore, Rebellion Record, Vol. III, pp. 373-376.
4. Off. Reds. Rebell. Series I, Vol. III, p. 373; Vol. VIII, p. 370. Moore, Rebellion Record, Vol. III, p. 376. In April, 1862, seventeen Negroes who

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formed the crew of the *Argo*, from Bath, Maine, were seized and put in jail at Petersburg—New York Tribune, April 22, 1861. Off. Reds. Rebell. Series I, Vol. III, p. 516. Ibid., Series I, Vol. V, p. 431; Vol. VII, p. 560. Ibid., Series I, Vol. IX, p. 364. Rebellion Record, Vol. III, p. 376.

5. New York Tribune, January 15, 1861. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. V, p. 1011.

6. New York Tribune, May 28, 29 and July 18, 1861.

7. Parton, History of the Administration of the Department of the Gulf; General Butler in New Orleans, pp. 127-133. Edward L. Pierce (Special agent of the Treasury), The Freedmen of Port Royal—Official Reports. This pamphlet gives a general picture of the economic and social conditions among the freedmen, which appears to be typical.

8. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. II, p. 53. McPherson, Rebellion, p. 245.

9. Springfield Republican, January 13, 1864. Report of the Proceedings of the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, 1863, p. 11.

10. The Springfield Republican, January 13, 1864. Dunbar Rowland, Jefferson Davis, Vol. I, p. 522.

11. Springfield Republican, January 13, 1864. New York Tribune, January 15, 1862. Private and Official Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. III, pp. 223-224.

12. First Annual Report of the American Freedmen's Union Commission, 1866, pp. 1-2. The American Freedmen, 1866-1867. Minutes of the Convention of Freedmen's Commissions held at Indianapolis, 1864. The organizations which were present were: The Cleveland Freedmen's Aid Commission; the Contraband Relief Commission of Cincinnati; The Western Freedmen's Commission; The Indiana Freedmen's Aid Commission. First Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen, 1865.

13. Edward L. Pierce, The Freedmen of Port Royal. Official Reports, E. W. Pearson, Letters from Port Royal, written at the time of the Civil War. N. P. Banks, Emancipated Labor in Louisiana. New York Tribune, January 1, 1862; February 20, 1862. Rumors had been started regarding the failure of the United States Government to pay wages which it promised and this caused at first an unwillingness among the Negroes to work. See Moore, Rebellion Record, Companion Volume, p. 313. Charles Nordhoff, Freedmen of South Carolina. Howard Autobiography, Vol. II. Elizabeth H. Botume, First Days among the Contrabands.

14. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series III, Vol. IV, p. 166. The Liberator, November 11, 1864.

15. New York Tribune, January 28, 1863. Annual Cyclopaedia, 1863, p. 430. Atlantic Monthly, Vol. XII, September, 1863, pp. 308-310.

16. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. IX, p. 370. New York Tribune, November 25, December 6, 1861. Alexandria Gazette, September 10, 1862. Private and Official Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. II, p. 439. Report of the Condition of the Freedmen by Chaplain Conway, Superintendent of Free Labor, to Major General Banks, 1864, p. 9. House Executive Documents, 37th Congress, Second Session, No. 85, p. 2.

17. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. XVIII, pp. 480-481.

18. Chas. Nordhoff, The Freedmen of South Carolina, p. 5. New York Tribune, September 23, 1861.

19. Frederick Douglass, U. S. Grant and the Colored People. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series III, Vol. III, pp. 1139-1144. Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. III, pp. 183-190. Report of the American Missionary Association, 1863, p. 48.

20. President Yeatman of the Western Sanitary Commission visited the camps and prepared a report which presented a plan for the organization of free labor. This report provided for a Bureau of Commissioners who were appointed to approve contracts, regulate wages of laborers, and with the aid of superintendents and supervising agents to seek to improve the economic condition of the freedmen. See James E. Yeatman, Suggestion of a Plan of Organization for Freed Labor and the Leasing of Plantations along the Mississippi River under a Bureau appointed by the Government, 1864.

21. Private and Official Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. II, pp. 447-450.
22. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. XIII, p. 877. The slaves employed by the Confederacy had been declared free by Congressional Act. Statutes-at-Large, Vol. XII, p. 591.
23. Congressional Globe, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 1141, March 10, 1862.
24. New York Tribune, August 23, 1861.
25. Ibid., January 17, 1862.
26. Congressional Globe, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, May 26, 1862, p. 2342.
27. New York Sunday Atlas, December 22, 1861.
28. New York Tribune, July 5, August 8, October 1, November 5, 1862.
29. The Liberator, October 14, 1864.
30. Annals of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York, pp. 153-154. Annals of the Massachusetts Mechanics Association, p. 58. Powderly, Thirty Years of Labor, p. 58.
31. New York Commercial Advertiser, July 1, 1863. E. D. Fite, Social and Economic conditions in the North during the Civil War.
32. New York Tribune, July 1 and 15, 1861.
33. Nordhoff, America for the Free Workingman, p. 10.
34. Alfred E. Matthews, A Journal of Flight, 1861, pp. 10-13.
35. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. V, pp. 79-83. New York Evening Post, May 2, 1861. New York Tribune, January 17, February 7, March 18, 1861. Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. II, p. 186.
36. New York Tribune, July 22, 1861; December 26, 1862.
37. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. XVIII, pp. 1069, 1077.
38. N. P. Banks—Emancipated Labor in Louisiana, p. 7.
39. New York Tribune, January 19, 1861.
40. General Assembly of South Carolina, December, 1861, p. 53. Acts of the General Assembly of Georgia, November to December, 1861, p. 71.
41. Chicago Tribune, April 9, 1861.
42. Acts of the General Assembly of Georgia, November-December, 1861, pp. 121-122.
43. Ibid., 1862, p. 96.
44. New York Tribune, March 25, 1863.
45. McNeill, The Labor Movement, p. 126. New York Tribune, August 1, 1862. A few years later white and colored men were noticed in a trades-union parade and the latter were received by salute into the procession, McNeill, p. 126.
46. New York Tribune, August 6, 1862.
47. New York Commercial Advertiser, July 8, 1863. Fincher's Trades Review, July 11, 1863.
48. New York Commercial Advertiser, July 24, 1863.
49. New York Commercial Advertiser, July 15, 1863.
50. Ibid., July 10, 1863.
51. Ibid., July 14-15, 1863. The New York Tribune, July 11-17; New York Times, July 14-16; New York Herald, July 13-16. Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia, 1863. Barnes, The Draft Riots in New York.
52. New York Commercial Advertiser, July 16, 1863.
53. The New York Commercial Advertiser, July 22, August 12, 1863.
54. New York Tribune, December 1, 1862.
55. Report of Government Agent, Mr. Lane, New York Tribune, January 15, 1862.
56. Thompson, From Cotton Field to the Cotton Mill, p. 251.
57. New York Tribune, April 3, 1861.
58. House Executive Documents, 38th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 17-19.

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59. Report of Captain Horace James, Superintendent of Negro Affairs in North Carolina, *The Freedmen's Record*, September, 1865, p. 142.
60. *The National Freedman*, April 1, 1865, pp. 90-91.
61. *The New York Tribune*, December 26, 1863.
62. Quoted in Ethel Armes, *The Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama*, pp. 77-78.
63. *The Freedman's Record*, 1865, p. 79.
64. See "Lincoln's Plan for Colonizing the Emancipated Negroes," by the writer in the *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. IV, pp. 7-21.
65. *The Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Federal Edition, Vol. VIII, pp. 173-174, 306. *Life and Works of Abraham Lincoln*, edited by M. M. Miller, Vol. II, p. 74.
66. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897*, Vol. VI, p. 54.
67. *Congressional Globe*, April 16, 1862. Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. VI, p. 356. Raymond, *Public Services and State Papers of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 504.
68. *New York Tribune*, August 26, 1862.
69. *Ibid.*, November 27, 1862.
70. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, Vol. VII, p. 127.
71. MSS., Archives of the Department of the Interior. The development of this plan is described in the article noted above, see note 64, Chapter IV.
72. *New York Tribune*, January 8, 1862. These immigrants came from as far west as Ohio, and from Pennsylvania and Canada—*Ibid.*, November 30, 1861. The colonization projects in Hayti, Chiriqui and other places are described by official citations in Senate Executive Documents No. 55, 39th Congress, 1st Session.
73. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, Vol. I, p. 237. *Charleston Mercury*, January 3, 1861.
74. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series 1, Vol. XIV, pp. 693, 782. Vol. V, p. 579; Vol. VII, pp. 711, 723; *Savannah Republican*, November 5, 1862. *New York Tribune*, June 4, 22, April 20, July 23, 1861, quoting the *Richmond Examiner*. *Alexandria Gazette*, August 6, 1862. Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 126. Dunbar Rowland, Jefferson Davis, Vol. V, pp. 352, 420, 446, 597; Vol. VI, pp. 91, 456. See "The Employment of Negroes as Soldiers in the Confederate Army" by the writer in the *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. IV, pp. 239-253.
75. *Laws of Florida*, 12th Session, 1862, Chap. 1378.
76. Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina passed in December, 1862, February and April, 1863, pp. 105-108.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 109, 110, 111.
78. *Ibid.*, Session of 1864-1865. December 23, 1864, pp. 244-246.
79. *Ibid.*, September and December, 1863, p. 176.
80. *Public Acts of Tennessee*, 1861, pp. 49-50.
81. Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina, December, 1861, p. 53. (December 21, 1861.)
82. Acts of the General Assembly of Georgia, November-December, 1861, pp. 71-72.
83. *Ibid.*, November-December, 1863, p. 46.
84. *Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States*, Vol. III, p. 191, March 23, 1863.
85. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series IV, Vol. III, pp. 780, 933, *Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States*, Vol. IV, p. 260.
86. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. IX, p. 42.
87. *Ibid.*, Series 1, Vol. VII, p. 741; Vol. XI, pt. III, p. 597.
88. For an account see *The Collapse of the Confederacy*, Howard University Studies in History, No. 2, pp. 420-421. This study is the result of an investigation made under the direction of Professor Edward Channing at Harvard University, 1920-1921. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series 1, Vol. XVI, pt. I, pp. 816-817. *Ibid.*, Vol. XVI, pt. II, pp. 228, 268.

89. New York Tribune, January 8, 1862. Indianapolis Journal, December 23, 1861. The newspaper accounts are the only source for this incident.

90. MSS. Reynolds, Letter Book (1865); March 25, 1865. Nashville Union, May 24, 1862, quoting the Louisville Journal.

91. Private and Official Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. II, pp. 126-127. American Historical Association Report 1902, Vol. II, p. 312.

92. New York Tribune, September 26, 1862; February 17, 1863; MSS. Diary of J. P. Benjamin (Pickett Papers), July 28, 1862. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. VII, p. 595; Vol. IX, p. 373.

93. Celebration of the Ninetieth Anniversary of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, 1866, p. 22.

94. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 162-165.

95. Private and Official Correspondence of General B. F. Butler, Vol. II, pp. 210-211, Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 264.

96. Ibid., Vol. IX, p. 390.

97. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. XIV, p. 378, July 17, 1862. The employment of Negroes became legal under the act empowering the President to receive persons of African descent, for the purpose of constructing intrenchments or performing camp service or any war service for which they might be found competent.

98. The principal printed sources of information concerning the Negro's Military service are the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, the War Department orders and circulars, the official Army Register of the Volunteer Forces of the United States, 1861-1865, 8 Vols. Bibliography of State Participation in the Civil War (War College Publication No. 9, pp. 953-962). Other information may be secured from G. W. Williams, The Negro Troops in the Rebellion and the History of the Negro in America, Vol. II; William Wells Brown, The Negro in the American Rebellion; Norwood P. Hollowell, The Negro as a Soldier in the War of the Rebellion.

99. The main body of Negro soldiers was known as the "United States Colored Troops." This body of troops comprised numerous regiments, separate companies and batteries. A few of the colored organizations did not form a part of the "United States Colored Troops" proper, but were *State Volunteer organizations*.

100. Frederick Douglass issued an appeal in pamphlet form from Rochester, New York, March 2, 1863. It was entitled "Men of Color, to Arms!"

101. New York Herald, August 5, 1862. New York Tribune, August 4, 5, 1862. Greeley, The American Conflict, Vol. II, pp. 526-527.

102. New York Tribune, January 20, July 10, November 11, 21, 1862; January 24, 30, 31, 1863, for information concerning Colonel Higginson's Regiment. See General Saxton's Report in Off. Reds. Rebell., Series I, Vol. XIV, p. 190.

103. Colonel N. P. Hollowell, The Negro as a Soldier in the War of the Rebellion, p. 7.

104. Record of the Service of the Fifty-fifth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers (Cambridge, 1868), p. 112.

CHAPTER V

WILL THE NEGRO WORK?

THE PROBLEM OF RECONSTRUCTION

THE Civil War changed the economic life of the South by shifting its basis from slave labor and by destroying the economic superstructure which had been built upon it. The old economic system was torn up by the roots. The result was that the South was thrown into a completely disorganized economic condition. The war struggle had been carried on until the available governmental resources of this section and many stores of private wealth were exhausted. All wealth was not destroyed, however. The private fortunes of blockade runners had increased. Many city merchants continued their prosperity. Articles of luxury and the life of pleasure were not unknown to those who had the specie, particularly gold, with which to make the purchase. But to the average southerner, the war meant sacrifice and disaster. The military prevented a state of anarchy from prevailing in some localities, and it also rendered valuable assistance to the returning Confederates in their adjustment to civil life. Slave-owners found themselves facing problems for which they found no immediate solution. Other classes in the rural and urban communities, where northern armies had made their paths, were in destitute circumstances.¹

The existence of this situation among the southern whites made it difficult for measures of relief to be taken for the freedmen. There were hardships, espe-

cially among the former slaves who were aged and infirm, and also among many of those who had left their former homes in search of larger freedom.² This transition, from slave labor to free labor, and from feudal society to a modern society, disturbed all groups—the former masters, the former slaves and the poorer whites. In the new economic system no one of the groups was willing immediately to trust the other groups.

While confusion reigned in many sections, yet in the districts in which the National forces were in control, order prevailed and the adjustments between the groups were more easily made. In several of these districts the disorganized labor system had been remedied by the action of military commanders. The freedmen were collected in camps, farms and communities where they worked for wages, or for shares of crops, or for themselves as renters and owners. In these communities many were known to have been sick or to have died from disease, exposure, or lack of medical attention.³ About 20,000 had gathered in the District of Columbia, 100,000 in Virginia, 50,000 in North Carolina and as many in South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana.⁴ Large settlements were formed along the Mississippi River, under the supervision of Treasury agents and army officers. Many of the freedmen in these camps were in constant anxiety concerning their new condition. They feared to return to their former masters because of the dread of vengeance; and if they remained in the army camps, they were expecting gifts of land from the government to aid them in beginning the future anew.⁵

In addition to these freedmen who took refuge with the armies, many others who remained with their masters had been taken to Texas or into the interior of Georgia and Alabama.⁶ As soon as the news of freedom was received, others in large numbers ran away

from their plantations to the cities. There were those also, who because of close attachment to their masters and mistresses—these instances are not unusual—remained on the plantation and continued to work amid the new conditions and under the supervision of their former owners.⁷ Such instances must not blur the vision of the serious student so that the disorganization of labor conditions is not seen. There were also planters who drove the freedmen from their plantations and thus increased the number of the unemployed.⁸ Other planters concealed freedom from their slaves as long as they could, owing to the suspicions which were common, that the former slaves, when they were made free, would become either insubordinate or seek for larger liberty by flight. The concealment of freedom was successful in some cases until late in 1865.⁹ The rumors of insurrections, of retaliation by the freedmen and of the repetition of "the horrors of San Domingo" proved groundless, and the transition to a free labor system was accomplished without bloodshed on the part of the Negroes.

As the war closed, the great question before the South was, "Will the Negro work?"¹⁰ Many of the people of the South, who claimed to know the Negro best, believed that the freedmen would not work without compulsion and could not work without direction by a white superior. This had been the position of the South for years and one of its strong arguments against abolition.¹¹ The southern planters were not agreed that the Negro would work for wages. The Negroes were equally distrustful of the planters' willingness to pay them.

In many places this lack of eagerness to undertake labor was interpreted as a racial disinclination. In truth, the disinclination to labor is a natural tendency in all the human race. Men in all races are not inclined to labor, unless they are compelled to, by forces

either without or within. The compulsion may arise from the need of food, clothing and the necessities of life, or from family needs, or from force, or from the desire for wealth, or ease, or glory, or the love of the work. Whether created by oneself, or for one by another, it is nevertheless a compulsion. Even the early colonists found themselves faced with the unavoidable decree that in order to live they must work. For centuries the only stimulus to slave labor was the fear of punishment, the gift of a holiday or time off when tasks were completed. When the old stimulus to industry was removed and restraint was gone, it was scarcely to be expected that the transition should have been made without some interruption to labor. The great wonder is that the freedmen were ready to complete their adjustment to the new conditions so rapidly. They lived in a section where labor was disdained and where those who worked with their hands were regarded as inferiors. Although shackled by the past, and hampered by contemporary southern labor ideals, the former slaves rapidly seized the new opportunities and within a few years after the war they were working more earnestly than when they were mere units in the slave régime.

Two efforts were made to control and assist the freedmen in their labor relations with the southern whites. The first effort was made by legislation through the Black Codes of 1865-1866, and the second effort was made by philanthropy as exercised by the Freedmen's Bureau and by similar independent organizations. During the winter of 1865-1866, laws were passed by the confederate states defining the relations of Negroes and whites. These laws attempted first to present definitions of "persons of color." Various statements were made concerning color and blood. A law of South Carolina stated that any descendant of a person of color "who may have Caucasian blood seven-

eights or more shall be deemed a white person."¹² This was an unusual statement of the law, in that the mention of blood proceeds from the Caucasian rather than the Negro point of view. Some laws were distinct gains for the Negroes. Laws which prevented Negroes from holding property and denying to them the rights of the courts were repealed. Marriages were regulated, apprenticeships were guarded by a new set of laws, and jury rights were guaranteed. Vagrancy laws were passed which operated almost exclusively against Negroes.¹³ Many of these vagrancy laws were similar to laws which were operative in northern states. Under these laws, the person who was assumed to have no means of support might be arrested, fined and hired out. The period of hire was limited in the states of Mississippi and Virginia, and in Alabama, the vagrant was worked under public overseers.

In Mississippi and South Carolina where the Negroes outnumbered the whites, and in Louisiana where the Negroes were nearly one-half of the population, the more rigid laws were passed. A law was passed in Mississippi excluding "any freedman, Negro or mulatto from a first-class passenger car set apart for white persons, except "in the case of Negroes or mulattoes traveling with their mistresses in the capacity of nurses."¹⁴ This law is the precursor of the "Jim-Crow" law of the present day. Provisions were incorporated into law for the making of contracts, and in South Carolina the form of the contract was prescribed.¹⁵ It was provided in this state also that in the making of contracts, "persons of color shall be known as *servants* and those with whom they contract shall be known as *masters*."¹⁶ This law was criticized by organizations in the north as an effort to return to slavery and to perpetuate the conditions of slavery under a new form.

Minute regulations were outlined in the laws. The

hours of labor were prescribed as from sunrise to sunset, the servant was not permitted to be absent from the premises without permission, he was not allowed to be a part of the militia or to carry arms, and he was answerable for all negligence, dishonesty or bad faith. As punishments, the Negroes might be hired out to their former masters; in Florida they might be whipped, and in South Carolina "moderately corrected." No person of color in South Carolina could practice the trade or business of an artisan, mechanic or shopkeeper or other employment on his own account unless he had procured a license from the judge of the District Court. But the latter must be satisfied with the skill and moral character of the applicant. The shopkeeper or peddler had to pay one hundred dollars and the mechanic or artisan ten dollars. As a punishment for a violation of this law, a fine of double the amount of the license was to be assessed and one-half of this amount was awarded to the informer.¹⁷ The practical effect of this law was to confine the freedmen to agriculture and to menial occupations. The cultivation of cotton had been the principal work of the slaves, and the law operated so as to produce the same result in freedom. The justice of its operation depended upon the District Judge. If he favored the entrance of the freedmen into the mechanical pursuits, the opportunity could be grasped by the Negroes. If he supported the slave system and its traditions, then the freedmen had no opportunity to rise through their efforts. Licenses were demanded of mechanics, storekeepers and artisans of color in Mississippi, and the white citizens of Vicksburg endeavored to drive "independent Negro labor" from the city. At Opelousas, Louisiana, no Negro or freedman who was not employed by some white person, or by his former owner, could reside within the town.¹⁸

There can be no reasonable doubt that the laws re-

lating to mechanics and artisans were caused by the fear of competition and the desire to confine the former slave to menial tasks. The Negroes would soon crowd out the whites, and the only remedy for the situation was in legislation. In the economic and social relations of the races, the prejudice against color was always a contributing factor in producing legal restrictions, but the economic law of supply operated with no less vigor. The consciousness of a difference of economic and social condition between the races was fundamental in causing this legislation concerning mechanical employments. Moreover, the Negroes, from the southern point of view, were the members of a race which was inferior by nature. This inferiority was not the result of slavery or limited opportunity; to the average southerner it seemed inherent. Such an idea was persistent and like Banquo's ghost it would not down.¹⁹ While it is not the historian's task to moralize, it is well to remember that there is no one of the so-called racial characteristics among Negroes and other races which may not be accounted for on the basis of racial experiences and environmental conditions as well as upon the basis of racial blood. In fact, the former is the more rational position to assume. The latter is based absolutely upon an assumption which no man may prove with certainty, but which one may assume in order to prove a point of view.

The freedmen in several sections protested against the passing of these laws. On January 10, 1866, a convention was held at Augusta, Georgia, in which an appeal was made to the Georgia Legislature.²⁰ The freedmen declared that during the period of the war the majority of them had remained silently at their homes, although they had known their power to rise, and, in the words of the address, to "fire your houses, burn your homes and railroads, and discommoded you in a thousand ways." They knew that they

could have swept the country like a fearful tornado—but they preferred “to wait on God and trust to the instinct of your humanity.” During the war, they had been forced into war service by the South. They had been compelled to throw up breastwork forts and fortifications and do the work of pioneers under the guns of the enemy, where, said they, “many of us in common with yourselves were killed.” But now, they declared that they could no longer remain indifferent when the state was passing laws which would bind them in future years. Against these laws, they would protest firmly and openly. Another address in the same year called attention to the treatment which the Negroes were receiving in all walks of life throughout the state. On the railroads they paid equal fare with others, but they did not “get half the accommodation.” They were “cursed and kicked by the conductors”—their wives and sisters were “blackguarded and insulted by the scrapings of the earth”—and if they spoke of their treatment they were “frowned upon with contempt and replied to in bitter epithets.”²¹

The complete operation of the laws which were passed by the legislatures of the southern states in the winter of 1865 was prevented by the presence of the army and the Freedmen's Bureau. Interest in such an organization as the Freedmen's Bureau dated from the winter of the first year of the war, when General Butler had gathered the contrabands together for work and protection. Out of his efforts a system of labor arose which gave fixed wages to the laborers and taught them the value of honest toil. Army commanders divided their districts among supervisors and officials who endeavored to systematize labor, to provide schooling, and to regulate relations between the races. The military attempted to do this work with the aid of the benevolent societies and the Treasury Department officials.²²

Directly after the issue of the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared freedom to the slaves within the districts then in rebellion against the government of the United States, a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 12, 1863, for the establishment of a Bureau of Emancipation in the War Department. This session of Congress adjourned without taking definite action upon this bill. On December 14, 1863, a bill for the same purpose was introduced but its title was changed before it left the House of Representatives to a "bill to establish a Bureau of Freedmen's Affairs." This bill was sent to the Senate on March 2, 1864, with the amendment which would place the Department under the control of the Secretary of the Treasury. The House did not readily agree with the Senate, and Congress adjourned without action.

On December 20, 1864, a Committee of Conference was ordered, and the result was the introduction of a bill on February 2, 1865, "to establish a Department of Freedmen and Abandoned Lands." A motion to lay this bill on the table was defeated by a vote of 82-67. The House agreed to the report of the committee, on February 9, 1864, by a vote of 64-62. The Senate refused to agree and another conference was called. On March 3, 1865, a bill was reported as a substitute entitled, "An act to establish a Bureau of Freedmen and Refugees." It was called "The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands." The term of its duration was fixed at one year after the close of the war. But on July 16, 1866, the Bureau was continued in force another two years.

In the meantime, the attention of private associations in northern states had been called to this situation, and efforts were put forward for immediate relief of the multitudes who were taking refuge in the Union Camps. E. L. Pierce, of Massachusetts, was ap-

pointed a Special Agent by the Secretary of the Treasury to assume charge over abandoned cotton in the districts of rebellion. His reports described the condition of the freedmen and urged that measures should be taken to prevent further suffering. While able-bodied men in the North went forth to war, those at home sent aid to the hospitals and endeavored to assist the freedmen in adjusting themselves to their new environment. Societies were formed in rural and urban communities which sent food, clothing, books and teachers to the freedmen of the South.

After the passage of the Freedmen's Department bill, President Lincoln proposed to begin the establishment of the Department, and he planned to appoint General O. O. Howard, who was in command of the army of Tennessee, as its head. The death of President Lincoln prevented this action, but on May 12, 1865, President Johnson made the appointment. The Commissioner took charge on May 15th.²³ However, Congress had adjourned without making any appropriation for this work. The result was that the work had to be carried on through the army, with which the freedmen officials were connected, and through the private associations which were already in the field. Funds had to be created in the Treasury Department from abandoned lands and cotton, and these funds were transferred to the Bureau by the President. On July 13, 1866, Congress appropriated funds for the maintenance of the Bureau, passing the bill over the President's veto. Later, laws were passed extending the existence of the Bureau to January 1, 1869, and the educational and financial activities of the Bureau were maintained until June 20, 1872.²⁴

The work of the Freedmen's Bureau consisted in the regulation of the labor of the freedmen, the management of abandoned lands, the relief of distress among refugees and freedmen, the supervision of jus-

tice to freedmen and the maintenance of schools for them. In accomplishing these purposes the Bureau was criticized severely by southern sympathizers. Its work was misunderstood and resented from the first, and a whole-hearted cooperation was never secured from the white people among whom it labored. An attitude of hostility or indifference had existed for a long time between the South and the free Negroes. Laws had been passed which prevented the entrance of free Negroes into many states and prescribed the activities of those who were residents. When all the former slaves were made free, and the attitudes and purposes of the officials of the Bureau and of the northern men in Congress were misunderstood, the basis for larger racial antipathy was laid.

Regulations were issued by the officials of the Bureau in order to secure the reorganization of labor upon the basis of freedom. These orders were issued in the simplest terms, explaining the relations of the employer and employee. Public meetings were arranged in which instruction was given to the freedmen in the value of free labor. They were encouraged to secure land for themselves and work it. The planters were encouraged to divide their lands and to give each freedman one of these sections, for the tilling of which, wages or a share of the crop would be received. The planters and other employers were urged to pay either wages or shares of the crop at the close of the season.²⁵

Contracts were ordered to be made between the freedmen and their employers, and a typical contract was published which was to serve as a model.²⁶ It was as follows:

"Know all men by these presents that County, State of Georgia held and firmly bound to the United States of America by these presents in this contract. That he is to furnish the persons whose names are subjoined (freed laborers) quarters, fuel, healthy and substantial rations,

and the said persons are to labor faithfully on his plantation six days during the week, in a manner customary on a plantation, said persons to forfeit, in the whole or in part, their wages or their interest in the crop, in case they violate this contract. All differences to be referred to an officer or agent of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, for adjustment."

No.	Names	Ages	Rate of Pay per Dollars	Month Cents

.....

Employee.

"This contract is to commence with this date and close with the year. Given in duplicate at this day of 186..... Witness"

The Negroes were urged by the Commissioners to work, but they were told that they were free to choose their employers.²⁷ General Clinton B. Fisk issued an address from his office as head of the Freedmen's Bureau in the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, advising the freedmen to remain in their homes and to make contracts with their former masters, but if their owners would not make good contracts with them, giving them good wages or an equitable share of the crop, they would have "a perfect right to go" where they could improve their condition.²⁸

The fact that the Freedmen's Bureau aided the southern whites to a large extent as well as the freedmen is not only underestimated but also overlooked. It was reported in Tennessee when General Fisk assumed charge in 1865, that there were 25,000 persons who were being fed by the government and that rations to white persons exceeded those to the freedmen. In

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Alabama there were 130,000 destitute persons among the whites.²⁹ In Arkansas during the months of October to December, 1865, the number of refugees and the number of rations which were issued to them increased.³⁰

	No. of Refugees	No. of Rations to Refugees
October	1,593	12,658
November	869	11,935
December	1,815	19,352
Total	4,277	43,945

At Mobile, Alabama, five thousand and five hundred rations daily were issued to the whites in July, 1865, and less than one-tenth of this amount to the Negroes.³¹

Almost two years later, in spite of the percentage variations in population, it is estimated that the number of white persons who were destitute either equalled or exceeded the number of colored persons in nearly all the states which were reported. The report of General O. O. Howard, March 8, 1867, shows the number of destitutes approximately as follows.³²

	Whites	Blacks
Virginia	2,500	2,500
North Carolina	3,000	2,000
South Carolina	5,000	5,000
Florida	500	1,000
Georgia	7,500	5,000
Alabama	10,000	5,000
Tennessee	1,000	1,000
Mississippi	1,862	2,038
Arkansas	1,000	500
Louisiana	300	200
Total	32,662	24,238

At the beginning of the year 1866, another observer remarked that in South Carolina where the Negroes were a majority of the population "less is heard of colored than of white poor,"³³ and in Richmond, the former capitol of the Confederacy, during 1868, poor whites as well as blacks were seen in the line which formed at the soup house maintained by the Freedmen's Bureau.³⁴

Moreover, the number of rations which were received by the freedmen and the number of dependent freedmen decreased in Arkansas from October to December, 1865.³⁵

	No. of Freedmen	No. of Rations
October	1,517	26,583
November	1,227	25,173
December	714	15,850

In Virginia it was stated upon an observation, extending from June 15, 1865, to December 1, 1865, that the Freedmen were "laying aside their disposition to roam about and to seek the towns and camps. . . . Out of 70,000 gathered there (Southeastern Virginia) in extreme destitution, less than 4,500 are now receiving government aid and about one-half of these are soldiers' families."³⁶ In North Carolina, out of 350,000 colored people, only 5,000 were receiving support from the government in the winter of 1865. In Kentucky and Tennessee there were few dependents, and in Texas out of 400,000 Negroes, only 67 received aid.³⁷ The evidence clearly reveals that the freedmen adjusted themselves to the conditions of freedom more rapidly than the whites.

This situation among the white people of the South was the result of environmental conditions of the past and of the present. The pre-war generation was the heir of the tradition that labor was ignoble and that the hands of worthy men were not to be soiled by it. Moreover, war times had brought distressing conditions. Business was paralyzed, trade and commerce were disrupted, and agriculture—the main resource of the South—was encumbered with mortgage obligations, disorganized labor conditions and the lack of capital. The Confederate soldiers who returned from war were without work or capital. Another group of southerners referred to at times as "the indolent whites

of the South," "the sand hillers," or "the crackers," were destitute, and the Freedmen's Bureau was the source of their support. The planters would not employ them, because it was believed that they were not so valuable for agricultural labor as the Negroes. The testimony of one observer was that "they (the whites) are inclined to be idle and lazy, and think it degrading to work."³⁸ In city labor, however, preference was given to the whites, not because they were more valuable or more willing, but "because they were white."³⁹ On the whole, much suffering was relieved among the poor whites by the Freedmen's Bureau during the winter of 1865-1866, but the system of charity, under which the relief for them was organized and operated, occasioned some demoralization.

The landowners distrusted the freedmen's willingness to labor. Many reports show the fallacy of this judgment, for the freedmen were found to be working industriously and quietly.⁴⁰ A Freedmen's Convention at Mobile, Alabama, October 23, 1865, passed a resolution which declared that they were willing to perform faithful labor for any man who would pay just wages.⁴¹ There were Negroes who were unwilling to work, but this sentiment was caused more often by the failure or inability of the employers to pay wages, to share the crop equitably, or to manage them with tact and skill.⁴² One traveler reported that a southern planter had informed him that "he had offered employment to more than a hundred idle Negroes, but that not one of them would have it." The observer then adds, "I thought this a strong fact, but deemed it advisable to see what the Negroes had to say to it. My inquiries proved that while the planter's statement was perfectly correct, as far as it went, it altogether omitted the explanation. The facts turned out to be these: The planter had hired the Negroes the previous year, bargaining to give them

the value of half the amount of cotton they raised, deducting expenses. When the crop was sold, the Negroes came for their share. The planter told them that, unfortunately, owing to the fall in cotton, the crop had scarcely paid expenses, so that there was nothing for them this year, but he hoped the next year would prove better. This might be a perfectly true statement of the case, but the Negroes could not understand it. All they knew was, that they had worked for half the crop and had got nothing. Accordingly, when the planter offered to re-engage them the next year on the same terms as before, they could not see it. But probably there are white laborers who could not have seen it either."⁴³ But where justice was granted to the freedmen the experiment with free labor was successful. The reports of the assistant commissioners of the Freedmen's Bureau for 1866 assert that the experiment was successful in Alabama, North Carolina, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and other states.⁴⁴

Contracts to labor were made during 1865 at prices ranging in Alabama from \$10 to \$15 per month; in Georgia, from \$12 to \$15 per month; in Arkansas, at \$20 per month for first class hands; in Virginia, at \$130 a year or about \$10 per month, and in Florida from \$140 to \$150 per year. These contracts gave the freedmen the opportunity of earning money under a wage system, and although they were broken at times by the planters and the freedmen, they served as the best aids in the transition from slave labor to free labor.⁴⁵

The wages which were paid to male workers in southern agriculture in 1860, 1867 and 1868 are of interest. It is difficult to secure reliable wage averages because of the different systems of labor in these years, but the following table of wages is at least suggestive of the wage and labor situation:⁴⁶

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WAGE COMPARISON FOR 1860, 1867 AND 1868
(In Southern States)

States	1860	1867	1868
Virginia	\$105	\$102	\$102
North Carolina	110	104	89
South Carolina	103	100	93
Georgia	124	125	83
Florida	139	139	97
Alabama	138	117	87
Mississippi	166	149	90
Louisiana	171	150	104
Texas	166	139	130
Arkansas	170	158	115
Tennessee	121	136	109

In the majority of the southern states the actual money paid to the free Negro of 1867 was less than that which was paid to the hired slave of 1860. This comparison of wages shows that the economic condition of the agricultural laborer, from the wage point of view, had not greatly improved by the change to a free labor system. In slavery his personal expense account was a liability to his master. In freedom, his expense account was assumed largely by himself. Under such a wage stimulus as that of 1867-1868, there is wonder that the free Negro laborers were willing or could find it profitable to contract and to labor with any degree of efficiency. The wage of 1860 included rations and clothing. These are included with the money, but the wage of 1867 included rations only. The marked changes in 1868 were due to the financial collapse of this year, when the prices of commodities were low, the currency was disturbed and bankruptcy was general. The crops of the planters were disappointing; it was difficult to borrow money and consequently the wages of laborers were low.

During 1865 and 1866 wages were paid in money very generally. In 1867, however, because of the desire and often the necessity which the employers had to husband their cash money and because of the unreliability of the laborers over long wage-paying

periods, plans were made for the renting of land and for the payment of the rent in money or in crops. The system of labor upon shares was also introduced generally. The annual report of the Department of Agriculture for 1867 stated that there was no doubt that the labor of the freedmen in this transition period had yielded "lower returns" than the compulsory labor of 1860. If this were true of the laborers, it was equally true of the efficiency of the employer. White-law Reid after viewing the situation stated that "the Negroes were the only class at work."⁴⁷ Another writer was convinced that "a Negro fairly paid and otherwise justly dealt with, living under the same restraints of law which are found necessary for white laborers is a satisfactory laborer."⁴⁸ In truth, industry, stability, frugality and foresight were developed slowly among all classes of persons who had lived in the midst of the slave régime.

When the year 1866 opened there was reluctance among the Negroes to enter into contracts. Many of them had not understood the contracts from the first. When the season closed and the shares were divided and the wages partly paid, or not at all, there was much dissatisfaction among the freedmen. In addition, some of the planters found that the wage system was not so profitable to them and although the freedmen were willing, they were unwilling to make contracts on the same terms.⁴⁹ Other freedmen broke their contracts and thronged the cities where they spent their time in idleness. It was declared that they were lazy and that they worked indifferently. They would perform their tasks regularly for a day or two on the levees and in the fields, and then refuse to work for a day or two. Moreover, they had rude methods of working and it was found that "it gave one the backache to witness their labor; not that they mean to be idle; but their habit is to strike a few blows

and then lean against a fence in the sun—they never saw a gentleman work until the Yankees came here, and before this time, their only rule was to do as little as they could.”⁵⁰ Individuals of this type were found in all groups in the South, and they may be found among any undeveloped people. But racial traits are not the determining factors in these actions. The unsatisfactory regulation of wages, the consciousness of new liberty, the mutual lack of confidence between the former masters and the former slaves, and the attitude of the Southern Labor System, to which the Negroes along with others were subject, were the predominating influences in determining the Negro’s position toward labor in the early days of Reconstruction.

William E. Strong, Inspector-General of the Freedmen’s Bureau, reported on January 1, 1866, that two-thirds of the freedmen in the section of the country through which he had passed (Texas and all the southwest) had not been paid one cent in wages since they were set free. Promises of wages were made, he reported, but instances in which these promises were kept were rare. He found that the freedmen had been treated “universally with bad faith” and he could not blame them from hesitating to bind themselves by contracts for another year.⁵¹ A Freedmen’s Convention in Georgia in 1866 protested against the treatment which they received in the state and they stated that this treatment greatly militated against the success of the contract system.⁵² The success of the Free Labor experiment depended as much upon the planters and employers as upon the industry of the workers.

The majority of the white people of the South seemed to have been favorably disposed toward the Negroes; however, a minority would have oppressed them, and there might have been some difficulty if it had not been for the presence of the army. The feeling of the small planters and the lower classes was

hostile to them. They seemed to feel that, if the Negroes could not be retained as slaves, they should be moved away, and a supply of coolies should be imported in their places.⁵³ Thus many southern people arrived at the result of the free labor experiment prior to its trial. They knew with certainty that the Negroes would not work when they were free and they did not have the patience to wait for the trial, but they were ready from the first to pronounce any free labor with Negroes as a failure.⁵⁴ Such people developed their conclusions from superficial evidence. When there were Negroes who ran away from plantations upon which they were employed, it was conclusive proof that Negro labor was unstable and non-dependable; when there were Negroes who broke their contracts, it was decisive evidence that the Negro had no conception of the moral obligation of a contract; when there were Negroes who were idlers about town or who worked indifferently, it was conclusive that the Negro was indolent by nature. It is true that there were Negroes who did all of these things, but there were large numbers who worked faithfully at their tasks. These arguments were parts of the traditional beliefs concerning the Negroes in the South, and distinctions, on the basis of individual merit were rarely made. Lazy, shiftless white men were judged as individuals, but lazy, shiftless Negroes were judged as types and representatives of the group.

Possessed with these ideas, it was natural that some whites should introduce physical compulsion and fear in order to maintain control and force the Negroes to work. Acts of violence were reported in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Texas and Mississippi. These acts were not confined completely to the lower classes of whites, for there were "gentlemen of standing" who were also guilty.⁵⁵ Secret societies, such as the Ku Klux Klan, were re-

sponsible for the large amount of opposition. The effect of this action was to instill fear among the Negroes and to destroy the efficiency of Negro Labor in some sections. There were other employers who acquiesced only sullenly to the new order, and either by fraud or deception made efforts to take advantage of the freedmen. Contracts were drawn up by this group of employers at nearly the same prices as in slavery days when the masters received the wages of hired slaves, and the Negroes found it impossible to live, for in slavery lost time by sickness or idleness or accidents was the loss of the master, but now these losses were borne by the slave and his wages were often insufficient to meet them.⁵⁶

In order to free themselves from these conditions, there were Negroes who fled from their old homes to the cities, and to the north. Some of them were prompted by the spirit of adventure and by the desire to enjoy their new freedom.⁵⁷ Others were attracted to the towns and the cities by the report of better conditions and larger wages. According to the Census of 1870, thirty-five towns in Virginia showed an increase of population over the census of 1860. The white population was increased by 705 persons and the Negro population by 25,834. On the other hand, the southwest and the rural sections showed decreases in population. In March, 1867, large numbers went from North Carolina and South Carolina to the Mississippi Valley, attracted by the promise of higher wages, and in Arkansas and Texas there was a restlessness also.⁵⁸ With little doubt there was a disposition among the former slaves to rove from town to town and from one place to another. It is reported, however, that by the autumn of 1866, this condition had been corrected.⁵⁹ Before the close of the war, the freedmen had come in large numbers to the District of Columbia. They had come for protection, in

search of work, with the armies as laborers and servants and in the expectation of finding in the capital a larger welcome than elsewhere.⁶⁰ Many of those who came would not work immediately, and only necessity brought about work for this shiftless element.⁶¹

The overpopulation of certain localities caused several suggestions to be made in order to relieve the situation. It was suggested that the freedmen should settle in the West by allowing them to take advantage of the Homestead Law.⁶² Carl Schurz proposed that they should be used in the construction of the Pacific Railroad. This would help the freedmen to secure work and it would show the South that if it was desired to keep their laborers, better inducements must be offered them than they could find elsewhere. In accordance with this plan an agent arrived in Washington to obtain freedmen to the extent of from one thousand to five thousand for work upon the Pacific Railroad, and it was regarded as an excellent plan to solve the employment and congestion questions.⁶³ Other calls were received from railroad and mining companies which requested that colored labor should be sent to them. Coal miners were sought in Indiana and Illinois; railroad workers were in demand in West Virginia and Ohio.⁶⁴ Employment offices were opened in several large cities of the border and northern states, as well as in the southern states where the Freedmen's Bureau was in operation. Cairo, Illinois, was the western center through which many freedmen found employment. A large settlement of them developed at Lawrence, Kansas, where they found employment and worked at good wages.⁶⁵ In this way Negro labor was shifted in response to the demand. Through the Washington employment office it was reported that 773 had been placed by contract from July 20, to October 31, 1865. The National Freedmen's Relief Association had established an employment office which had

sent 3,000 persons into northern, eastern and western states.⁶⁶

Congress also made an effort to aid the distribution of the freedmen. On June 21, 1866, an act was passed which declared that the public lands of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Florida were opened to colonization by all persons, without distinction of race. The lands were granted in half-quarter sections or 80 acre lots. In Florida, where a definite effort was made to colonize the freedmen, there were 2,012 homesteads, covering 160,960 acres, which were occupied by them during the year ending October 1, 1867. In Arkansas, the total number of occupied homesteads was 243, and of these the freedmen had occupied 116 during the same period.⁶⁷ By suggestions, encouragement, and natural inclinations, the distribution of this labor continued throughout the Reconstruction period.

The impression was widespread among the freedmen that the abandoned and confiscated lands were to be divided into lots of forty acres, either at Christmas, 1865, or New Year's Day, 1866. The basis of this rumor was said to have been created during the war by the Confederates, who were under the impression that the confiscated lands would be used for this purpose. This rumor of the division of the land caused a more rigid resistance among them to the Union cause. The idea of land distribution was also encouraged by the act which created the Freedmen's Bureau, and by the misunderstanding of General Sherman's order concerning the division of the land upon the Sea Islands. The expected gift from the government caused many freedmen to refrain from seeking labor and from making contracts for the same.⁶⁸ So firmly fixed was the expectation of the gift of "forty acres and a mule," that it was removed only by the passing of the time for the distribution of land without the land being given. On November 11, 1865, General

Howard urged all officials and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau to use every effort to remove this impression.⁶⁹ However fleeting the idea may have been, it was a serious obstacle during the winter of 1865-1866 to the successful continuance of labor.

The economic condition of the Negroes improved with the advancing months, and after 1865-1866, the destitution and suffering among them was markedly decreased. They worked at their trades as carpenters, masons, shoemakers, and in the fields as laborers, renters, and owners of plantations.⁷⁰ Many difficulties were encountered by the field laborers—low wages, fraud, ill-treatment and sullen indifference. In spite of these obstacles there were those who endeavored to rise to the larger economic opportunities. Better rewards came to those who raised and marketed their own products, and lands with implements for working them were purchased.⁷¹

At Hampton, Elizabeth County, Virginia, in 1865, a census of the Negro population was taken, which showed that there were 4,500 Negroes in this community. They owned property valued to the amount of \$51,006; and in other parts of the state it was reported that much real and personal property was owned by them.⁷² During the next year, one writer stated that in Richmond he had "the satisfaction of seeing the Negroes who 'would not work' actually at their tasks. Here, as everywhere else in Richmond and indeed in every part of Virginia, . . . colored laborers were largely in the majority. They drove the teams, made the mortar, carried the hods, excavated the old cellars or dug new ones, and sitting down amid the ruins broke the mortar from the old bricks and put them up in neat piles ready for use. There were also colored masons and carpenters employed on the new buildings. I could not see but these people worked just as industriously as the white laborers."⁷³

In several communities of the South there was a manifest desire among the Negroes to become land-owners and to improve their economic status.⁷⁴ One skillful mechanic in South Carolina was worth \$50,000; and within six months more than forty heads of families had each purchased from \$500 to \$1200 worth of city property in Charleston. In the upland region, land was being bought by the freedmen.⁷⁵ At Austin, Texas, one of the subscribers to a Joint Stock Building Company was a Negro, Thomas Hill, who had subscribed for \$200 worth of stock. *The Daily Austin Republican* invited the colored people to follow his example. At Richmond, in 1868, the Negroes organized the Virginia Home Building Fund and Loan Association.⁷⁶ In various parts of the South the economic condition of individuals was improving. In the District of Columbia, there were 6,485 white persons who were owners of real estate and 1,399 colored persons who were owners. There were 8,895 white persons who were renters and 4,595 colored persons who were renters; 28,976 white persons and 15,905 colored persons were employed in gainful occupations; 98 colored persons were employed in "trades of finance."⁷⁷ This report showed a favorable economic condition for the Negroes in the District of Columbia.

The free Negroes of Louisiana, who numbered 18,647, paid taxes in 1860 on an assessment of \$13,000,000, or an average of about \$700.⁷⁸ There were Negroes in this state who were merchants, bankers and large planters. Consequently after the war they handled thousands of dollars and were known to be wealthy. At Beaufort, South Carolina, from 75 to 80 homes and house lots were bought in 1865 by Negroes, at prices which ranged from forty dollars to eighteen hundred dollars. The aggregate sum amounted to about forty thousand dollars. In the neighborhood of Beaufort, seven thousand three hun-

dred and fifty acres of land were owned and worked by them.⁷⁹ Throughout South Carolina and Mississippi the same evidence of thrift and ownership of land was discovered.⁸⁰ Not only the owners but the lessees of plantations were improving their condition. In Arkansas, ten lessees, selected at random, had realized \$31,000 from their crops. In the towns of the same states there were successful mechanics and laborers.⁸¹

It is said that the Negroes of Cincinnati owned in 1865 a half million dollars of taxable property. There were a half dozen men among these owners who were worth over \$30,000 each, and one among them was worth \$60,000. In New York, Peter Vandyke, Robert Watson, J. M. Gloucester and Mr. Crosby were men who were considered wealthy men. The Negroes of this city had \$755,000 invested in business carried on by themselves. In Brooklyn, they had invested \$76,000 in business and \$5,000 in Williamsburg. They owned real estate, which was unencumbered, to the extent of \$733,000 in New York, \$276,000 in Brooklyn and \$151,000 in Williamsburg. In Philadelphia, out of 4,000 families, 300 were living in homes owned by themselves, and among these there were "rich men." One of these, Stephen Smith, who was previously mentioned, was said to be worth over \$500,000. Cyprian Ricaud, of Louisiana, was regarded as the richest colored man in the United States. He was reported as worth over a million dollars. In Massachusetts, Connecticut, Illinois and Maryland, the same evidence was found. The Negroes were successful capitalists, brokers, business men and clerks before and after the war.⁸² It is evident that all the Negroes did not begin their freedom in 1865 in the midst of poverty. There were nearly a half million free Negroes in the United States at this time and many of these were in fairly prosperous circumstances. However true the statements regarding the post-war progress of the Negroes

in the United States may be, and however pleasant such oratory may be, statements which begin with the assertion that all the Negroes were poor in 1865 are not only exaggerated but untrue descriptions of the economic situation. In the same category will fall those statements which claim that Negro labor was on a "holiday" during Reconstruction.

In skilled labor the Negroes were maintaining their former places. It was said that there were at least two Negro craftsmen of most kinds to one of the white craftsmen in Mississippi, and in North Carolina more than one-third of the colored population was engaged in mechanical occupations. They were about six to one when compared with the white mechanics. According to a census of occupations which was taken in 1865, there were 100,000 Negroes who were mechanics and 20,000 white persons. The occupations of the Negroes included blacksmith, gunsmiths, cabinetmakers, plasterers, painters, ship-builders, stonemasons, bricklayers, pilots and engineers.

The colored pilots were among the best on any of the rivers in the state. One, who conducted a steamboat across the Cape Fear River, received as wages fifteen dollars per month more than any other pilot, and the engineer on the same boat was regarded as the best in the state. On the same river, a colored ship-builder was seen at work. Acting as master workman, he was constructing a steamboat with the aid of other Negro assistants. This was regarded as unusual because in slavery no colored man could act as a master workman.⁸³ With the close of the war, Negro workmen were found in many of the mechanic arts of the South, and in skill and efficiency they compared favorably with the best white mechanics.⁸⁴

The thrift of the successful Negroes and the rumors of the wealth among them brought about the organization of the Freedmen's Savings Bank. Army de-

posit banks had been maintained in some army divisions,⁸⁵ and the success of these institutions gave rise to the idea of a larger bank. The South Carolina Savings Bank at Beaufort was established August 27, 1864. It had on deposit by the close of the year \$65,000.⁸⁶ The Freedmen's Savings Bank was not connected legally with the Freedmen's Bureau, although it was supported by its officials. J. W. Alvord, Inspector of the Freedmen's Schools, was instrumental in having the corporation created by Congress. On March 3, 1865, The National Freedmen's Savings and Trust Company was incorporated by act of Congress, "to receive on deposit such sums of money as may . . . be offered . . . by or on behalf of persons heretofore held in slavery in the United States, or their descendants, and investing the same in the stocks, bonds, Treasury Notes and other securities of the United States."⁸⁷

The hope of those who initiated the organization of the corporation was that this institution would be able to do for the freedmen "that which savings banks have done for the workingmen of the North."⁸⁸ The bank was welcomed by the Negroes of the South. They came to its doors bringing their hoarded parcels of money, which were carried often in bundles of paper, rags and old stockings. One man brought seven hundred dollars in gold which he had kept concealed for twelve years.⁸⁹ Advertisements were placed in the newspapers and pamphlets; tracts and circulars were distributed in order to attract the attention of the freedmen. In response, they came with their earnings, day by day and week by week, so that the deposits grew rapidly.

The amount which was due to depositors on December 31, 1865, was \$201,126.55. The deposits which were received at several branches during the month of January, 1866, were reported as follows:⁹⁰

Vicksburg	\$ 5,087.00
Wilmington	902.44
Norfolk	491.20
Newbern	35.00
Louisville	4,895.15
Huntsville	390.22
Memphis	620.00
Nashville	4,259.96
Washington	4,369.05
Savannah	1,579.55
Mobile	4,809.00
Charleston	424.15
Richmond	170.15
Beaufort	498.20

\$28,531.07

Total deposits due depositors..... \$229,657.62

For the year ending March 1, 1866, the total amount of deposits was \$305,167.00. And the total amount of drafts was \$105,883.58.⁹¹ The summarized annual statements which show the bank's growth follow:

For Year Ending March 1	Total Deposits	Total Drafts	Balance Due Depositors
1866.....	\$305,167.00	\$105,883.58	\$119,283.42
1867.....	1,624,853.33	1,258,515.00	336,338.33
1868.....	3,582,378.36	2,944,079.36	638,299.00
1869.....	7,257,798.63	6,184,333.22	1,073,465.31
1870.....	12,605,781.95	10,948,775.20	1,657,006.75
1871.....	19,952,647.36	17,497,111.25	2,455,836.11

The economic condition of the freedmen and the savings in this bank assisted in disproving the assertion that the freedmen were improvident and that they were unable to care for themselves. It was demonstrated that they would work for wages and that they would save voluntarily.

During the war and in the decade immediately after the war, the Negroes, with the wealth which they had acquired through savings, engaged in business as individuals and as groups. A typical group enterprise

with which Negro labor was connected was the Chesapeake Marine Railroad and Dry Dock Company. This corporation was organized by Negroes at Baltimore, Maryland, in 1865, and it was in existence until 1883. It was capitalized at \$40,000. Under the leadership of Isaac Myers, \$10,000 was raised in cash and paid as a first payment upon a shipyard. Over 300 Negro mechanics found employment there. Within five years the yard was out of debt.

The organization of this company grew out of the pressure which was placed upon Negro caulkers by white caulkers. The Negroes were driven out of the shipyards, either by unfair competitive methods, by prejudice or by force. Finally the white carpenters agreed among themselves not to work in those yards where Negro carpenters were employed. Since there were few Negro carpenters who were employed in the shipyards, the result was the organization of a company so that the Negroes could own and control a shipyard where their own workmen might labor. Railways were built for docking the ships, furnaces and workshops were erected, and the Negro carpenters and caulkers began their work. All went well for a decade. Soon the lack of knowledge of management and the absence of experience in business caused the failure of the company after twelve years of success. The decline in profits began in 1877, and continued until the business was abandoned in 1883.⁹²

Many Negroes having accumulated funds after several years of freedom and hoping to gain more riches, allowed themselves to become the prey of business promoters, who presented with glib tongues the get-rich-quick schemes. At Savannah, Georgia, \$50,000 was invested in a venture which proved worthless. The sum of \$40,000 was invested in a land and lumber enterprise which failed. Others, many of whom did not have an acquaintance with business, opened stores

and attempted to be merchants, but failures followed in quick succession.⁹³

There were freedmen also who were not succeeding so well in their agricultural labors. Droughts, floods, worms, neglect, and ignorance were the forces at work in producing individual failures. It was reported that one Mississippi Negro planter lost \$10,000 in cotton culture and another was \$2,000 in debt after the harvesting seasons. In Alabama it was said that the management of farms by Negroes was about 33 per cent less effective than by whites. The Negroes of Louisiana and Texas had failures among them when they planted for themselves.⁹⁴ This condition was the direct outgrowth of slavery. When the slaves were working in agriculture, there was a directing mind which knew not only the meaning of the day's work but also the meaning of the completed task. Now that the slaves were free, it was only by trial and error that they would learn the processes which were necessary in the production of a good crop and the knowledge of farm management which had been kept from them by the conditions of slavery.

The freedmen who were living in rural communities were often in the midst of poor surroundings and unhealthful conditions. The majority of the houses of these agricultural workers in the South were built of logs. They were without windows and often without floors. They were frequently overcrowded. In urban centers, living conditions were not very different. About Atlanta and other places where the army had devastated the country, the freedmen were living in destitution and in temporary quarters. At Washington the same condition among certain groups of freedmen from nearby places caused a recommendation to be made to raze the hovels in which the freedmen were living so as to make way for better buildings, but no action was taken.⁹⁵

The apprenticeship system was employed in some states in order to find homes and labor for the children of the destitute. Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina were the principal states which operated this system. In towns within these and other states this was found to be fostering the idea of compulsory labor. At best it could be useful only as a temporary expedient for relieving the distress which was abroad.⁹⁶ Organizations were created by the Negroes for the relief of their own poor and destitute. At Nashville, Tennessee, The Nashville Provident Association was organized with coal and wood depots, a soup house, a physician, and permanent relief measures were undertaken. Its daily reports revealed that a larger number of whites than of colored persons were beneficiaries of this service. Freedmen's associations for the relief of the poor arose in other places.⁹⁷

The willingness of the freedmen to work was asserted by themselves in their conventions, where they protested against the conditions which prevented their lack of freedom in securing labor at advantageous terms, and against the hinderances which prevailed after contracts were made. A convention at Hampton, Virginia, passed a resolution which asserted that they were quite capable of maintaining themselves in their new opportunities and that those who declared the opposite were either wickedly misrepresenting them or were ignorant of their capabilities. At Augusta, Georgia, they discountenanced vagrancy and encouraged every one of their group to obtain employment and to labor honestly, for they realized the importance to the race of the creation of a good record in the field of labor for this year. A more aggressive step was taken at Savannah, Georgia, February 6, 1866, when a committee of nine was appointed to assist the officers of the Freedmen's Bureau in freeing the city of vagrants.

A spirit of cooperation was manifested at Kinston, North Carolina, August 16, 1865, where an association of freedmen was formed to purchase homes by joint stock and to encourage thrift. The freedmen of Richmond, Virginia, on August 5, 1865, protested against their exclusion from the tobacco business and the substitution of white laborers in their places. They asserted that they had been engaged in the tobacco business exclusively before the war and they were asking in their petition that a way should be opened by which they could find employment in their former occupation. The same situation in the District of Columbia caused a meeting of colored workmen in Woodward Hall, December 14, 1867. A resolution was passed requesting Congress to devise some means for securing an equal apportionment of employment to both races. The petition was printed and a committee of fifteen was appointed to circulate it. Again, the next year, a petition was presented to Congress asking for an equal share of the labor on public improvements which were authorized by Congressional legislation. The freedmen were thus seeking to help themselves by protest, cooperation and declarations of willingness to labor.⁹⁸ Groups of them were willing to do all that they could to discourage idleness among other members of their race, to encourage the improvement of labor opportunities, and to protest against injustice and selfish oppression. For, immediately after the war, many avenues of former employment in the semi-skilled labor of the South were closed to them and they were forced to protest and petition the state legislature and the northern army officials that equal opportunities for labor should be given to them.

But how could the Negroes become good workers, when they were ignorant, was asked by a large group of people in the North and in New England. To this group the education of the Negro was regarded

as the necessary condition of his freedom. Following the Federal Armies, the Freedmen's Aid Societies had sent teachers and missionaries among the freedmen. Heroic work was done by the men and women of the North in the cause of education.⁹⁹ In November, 1865, there were 90 schools and 195 teachers maintained by the Freedmen's Bureau. In 1866, there were 493 schools in the southern states maintained by various branches of the American Freedmen's Union Commission. Reconstruction education has been variously criticized, but it must be acknowledged that it was a great crusade against ignorance and the vice which had kept a race in a slavery more dangerous than the slavery of the body. While others would wait for the effects of an evolutionary culture upon the emancipated people, the descendants of the school of abolitionists would hasten this by giving the free school to the former slave.¹⁰⁰

All of the education which was given to the freedmen was not as impracticable as writers have assumed. It was planned by some individuals that education and labor would go hand in hand, and that through the former the laborer would receive better wages and the employer would have a better worker.¹⁰¹ But education for either the Negro or other classes of workers had never been supported or tolerated by the majority of the people in the South. This helps to explain why Carl Schurz might hear continually the assertion that "learning will spoil the nigger for work."¹⁰² Efforts to disprove this assertion and to have education go along with labor were not lacking. At Hampton, Virginia, General Armstrong, Inspector of the Freedmen's Bureau for the Fifth District, was engaged in the problem of giving the freedmen a normal school education, and "of blending study with labor."¹⁰³ Normal schools with manual labor departments were proposed in North Carolina and Missouri. Mani-

festly some of these associations had practical work ideals in view when they were engaging in the cause of educating the freed slaves. Industrial schools were planned also to assist the female workers in garment making and in the repair of clothing. There were twenty-five of these schools in 1867.¹⁰⁴ The Douglas Institute in Baltimore was one, and in it the children of the working classes were taught. Their parents paid tuition fees of from one dollar to one dollar and a half per month.¹⁰⁵ These industrial schools were the forerunners of the industrial schools of the present day, and they assisted in fostering ideas of work among the classes attending them. Night schools were maintained also for workers who could not attend the day schools on account of their work. The classes met four or five evenings in the week and they lasted for two hours each evening.¹⁰⁶

These efforts helped the Negroes to adjust themselves to the new conditions of life as well as to conditions of free labor. They worked during Reconstruction, and they saved, and thus they proved the falsity of the ante-bellum assertion, that they would not work. While many misused their freedom, the conclusion is, without doubt, that the vast majority were laboring in freedom and making a place for themselves in the New Order. Moreover, in spite of the fact that many southern people continued to regard the Negroes as obstacles to southern economic progress, the Negroes were at work for themselves and for others, and by trial, success and error, they were contributing to the economic revival in southern life. In the new economic order of the South, Negro labor was destined to be one of its basic factors, as a result of these experiences.

REFERENCE NOTES

1. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 38. Report of the Joint Committee of United States Congress on Reconstruction, pp. 1-68. J. S. Pike, *The Prostrate State*, p. 117. Whitelaw Reid, *After the War*, p. 224.

2. Senate Executive Documents, No. 1, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 68, 73, 78. *The National Freedman*, June, 1865, pp. 160-161. Laws were passed in several states for the purpose of protecting the aged and infirm by prohibiting the masters from driving them away from their former homes.

3. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 144. See Chapter IV, *Negro Labor During the War*.

4. The Negro population in 1860 was as follows:

Slaves in Southern States	3,838,765
Slaves in Northern States	114,966
Slaves in Western States	29

Total slaves in the United States..... 3,953,760

Free Negroes in Southern States.....	258,346
Free Negroes in Northern States	225,274
Free Negroes in Western States	4,450

Total Free Negroes in the United States... 488,070

Total number of Negroes, slaves and free.. 4,441,830

Census Report.—Negro Population, 1790-1915, pp. 55-57.

5. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 15-16. It was reported that colored persons were being kidnapped in southern states and that they were being sold as slaves for transportation to Cuba. It was rumored also that southern refugees were bringing with them to Cuba thousands of slaves. These rumors are not supported by an investigation of the facts. See Southern Executive Documents, No. 30, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1-55.

6. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 15-31.

7. Smedes, *A Southern Planter*, p. 228.

8. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 15-

16. *Ibid.*, No. 6, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 51.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 15. Report of Joint Committee on Reconstruction, Part II, p. 103.

10. *The National Freedman*, Vol. I, August 15, 1865, p. 242. *The New York Times*, June 28, 1869. *The American Freedman*, July, 1869, p. 4. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 140.

11. This position was assumed in 1852 when it was boldly stated, "the African when released from the dominion of a master becomes the double slave of indolence and want." DeBow, *Industrial Resources*, Vol. II, p. 391.

12. Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina at the Annual Session of 1865, p. 10.

13. *Ibid.*; See also acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, December, 1865-March, 1866, pp. 239-241; Acts and Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of Florida, December, 1865, pp. 140-145; Laws of Mississippi, 1865, p. 90. Senate Executive Documents, No. 6, 39th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. I, gives a selected number of the laws relating to the freedmen. The Results of Emancipation, by a Committee of the American Freedmen's Union Commission, pp. 10-11. House Executive Documents, Nos. 118 and 30, 39th Congress, 1st Session.

14. Laws of the State of Mississippi, October-December, 1865, pp. 231-232.

15. Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina, 1865, p. 38.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 34. *The American Freedman*, July, 1866, p. 58. *The New York Tribune*, May 31, 1866. The number of freedmen who were employed by

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contract increased, from September, 1865, to December, 1865—See Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 16.

17. Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina, 1865, p. 39. Senate Executive Documents, No. 6, 39th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. I, p. 215.

18. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 23, 25.

19. The presence of this idea in present day writing of the history of this period may be seen in J. F. Rhodes' History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850, Vol. V, p. 556, etc.

20. Proceedings of the Freedmen's Convention at Augusta, Georgia, January 10, 1866, p. 18.

21. The American Freedman, April, 1866, p. 13.

22. See Chapter IV—Negro Labor during the Civil War.

23. It was reported that John M. Langston, a colored lawyer of Ohio, had been offered the position of Freedmen's Commissioner by President Johnson but he declined. See the Advance, September 26, 1867.

24. Congressional Globe, 38th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions. House Reports, No. 9, 38th Congress, 2nd Session. Report of Hon. T. D. Eliot, to the House of Representatives, March 10, 1868. Statutes at Large, Vol. XIII, p. 507. New York Tribune, August 22, 1865. National Freedman, June, 1865, p. 168. Freedman's Record, February, 1869, p. 1. P. S. Pierce, The Freedmen's Bureau.

25. Rules and Regulations for Assistant Commissioners of the Freedmen's Bureau, by General O. O. Howard, May 30, 1865. Circular Orders and Circular Letters of General O. O. Howard, Nos. 2, 5, 7, 8, 11. The Results of Emancipation, by a Committee of the American Freedman's Union Commission, pp. 24-27.

26. Senate Executive Documents, Vol. I, No. 6, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 50-51.

27. House Executive Documents, 39th Congress, 1st Session, No. 11, p. 54.

28. Senate Executive Documents No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 4-5. Proceedings of the Freedmen's Convention at Augusta, Georgia, January 10, 1866, p. 13.

29. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 67, 113.

30. Ibid., pp. 28-29.

31. The National Freedman, July 15, 1865, Vol. I, p. 197.

32. Senate Executive Documents, No. 1, 40th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 2, 26.

33. Ibid., No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 26.

34. The Advance, March 12, 1868.

35. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 28-29.

36. The Nation, January 18, 1866, Vol. II, p. 36.

37. Ibid., pp. 13, 15, 78, 80, 163.

38. Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, p. 117.

39. Letters from the South relating to the Condition of the Freedmen, p. 11.

40. Reports of Hon. T. D. Eliot to the House of Representatives, March 10, 1868.

41. The National Freedman, July 15, 1865, p. 224. Letters from the South, p. 9.

42. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 51-52. House Miscellaneous Documents, No. 14, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 2.

43. McCrae, Americans at Home, Vol. II, pp. 51-52.

44. Senate Executive Documents, No. 6, Vol. I, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 52, 97, 103, 113, 130, 161.

45. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 28, 29, 51, 52, 56, 88, 89. Proceedings of the Freedmen's Convention of Georgia, January 10, 1866, p. 12. Norfolk Day Book, January 11, 1866.

46. Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the year 1867, p. 416.
47. Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour*, pp. 302-303.
48. *The Nation*, Vol. II, p. 493.
49. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 23, 124.
50. Report of Captain Horace James, Superintendent of Negro Affairs in North Carolina, 1864-1865. *Freedmen's Record*, September, 1865, p. 143. Senate Executive Documents, No. 6, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 71-72.
51. The Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 83-84.
52. *The American Freedman*, April, 1866, p. 13.
53. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 48; *Ibid.*, No. 43, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 10; *Ibid.*, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 21; *Ibid.*, No. 6, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 144.
54. *Ibid.*, No. 6, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 157; *Ibid.*, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 16. See Johnson Papers in Library of Congress, C. G. Memminger to Johnson, for southern opinion on negro free labor. Proceedings of the Freedmen's Convention at Augusta, Georgia, January 10, 1866, p. 12.
55. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 21-22. *Ibid.*, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 9-23. *The Freedmen's Record*, June, 1867, p. 98. *The Daily Austin Republican*, September 30, 1868. *The Nation*, XXVIII, pp. 242, 386. *The Atlantic Monthly*, LXIV, p. 222.
56. *The Freedmen's Record*, June, 1867, p. 93. House Executive Documents, Vol. III, No. 50, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 2. *The Washington Evening Star*, August 2, 1866.
57. The majority of the studies in the Reconstruction Period have been content to refer to this circumstance as if it were the complete truth. The vagrancy of the freedmen was greatly exaggerated by these writers, without doubt, in order to justify or palliate the baneful influence of the Black Codes which followed. See Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, p. 156. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia during Reconstruction*, p. 42. Davis, *Reconstruction in Florida*, p. 341. Fecklen, *History of Reconstruction in Louisiana*, p. 118. Fleming, *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, p. 271. See also, Henry Latham, *Black and White*, a Journal of a three months' tour in the United States, pp. 57, 128, 139, 141. W. H. Dixon, *White Conquest*; Sydney Andrews, *The South Since the War*; Claudio Jannet, *Les Etats Unis Contemporains*, Chapters 22, 23; Jules Leclercq, *Un Eté en Amerique*, pp. 120, 124, 409, 410; David Thomas, *My American Tour*; A. K. McClure, *The South, its Industrial, Financial and Political Condition*.
58. *The Freedmen's Record*, Vol. III, June, 1867. Report of Hon. T. D. Eliot to the House of Representatives, March 10, 1868, p. 18. *The Nation*, Vol. I, p. 426. Andrews, *War Journal*, pp. 331-332, 340.
59. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 146. *Ibid.*, No. 2, p. 29.
60. The Colored population of Washington was 27,287 and of Georgetown, 4,262—a total Colored population of 31,549. See House Executive Documents, Vol. III, No. 50, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 710. It was reported that from 30,000 to 40,000 Negroes came into the District of Columbia during 1864. See report of the United States Commissioner of Education for the School of the District of Columbia, p. 215.
61. *The Washington Evening Star*, April 14, 1866. See W. H. Williams. *The Negro in the District of Columbia during Reconstruction*, Howard University Studies in History, No. 5.
62. House Executive Documents, Vol. III, No. 50, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 764.
63. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 45. *The Washington Evening Star*, June 15, 1867.
64. *Richmond Enquirer*, May 4, 1872; July 6, 1877.
65. Eaton, Grant, Lincoln and the Freedmen, pp. 37-39.
66. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 154. *The Freedmen's Record*, 1865; p. 43. Statistics and Statements Concerning the

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Educational Condition of the Colored People in the Southern States, p. 48. The American Freedmen, April, 1866, p. 5. The Daily Morning Chronicle (D. C.), May 25, 1866.

67. Report of Hon. T. D. Eliot to the House of Representatives, March 10, 1868. House Report, No. 121, 41st Congress, 2nd Session, p. 486.

68. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 140-141. House Executive Documents, No. 11, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 217.

69. Circular Orders, Freedmen's Bureau, November 11, 1865.

70. The American Freedmen, May, 1866, p. 28.

71. The New York Times, June 28, 1867.

72. The National Freedman, Vol. I. September 15, 1865, p. 267. Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, Part II, pp. 5, 67.

73. Trowbridge, The South, p. 150.

74. Senate Executive Documents, No. 6, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 48.

75. Letters from the South, p. 1.

76. The Daily Austin Republican, September 25, 1868. Richmond Enquirer, October 27, 1868.

77. Census of the District of Columbia, 1867, pp. 28-29.

78. Occasional Papers—Protestant Episcopal Freedmen's Commission, p. 19. The Census of 1860 substantiates these assertions regarding the economic condition of the Negroes of Louisiana.

79. Extracts from Letters of Teachers and Superintendents of the New England Educational Commission for Freedmen, pp. 4-5.

80. The Freedmen's Record, Vol. III, November, 1867, p. 165.

81. Ibid., February, 1868, pp. 24-25.

82. The National Freedmen, Vol. I, September, 1865, pp. 266-267. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 120-121.

83. Senate Executive Documents, No. 43, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 8. Freedmen's Record, Vol. IV, July, 1868, pp. 108-109.

84. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 29. Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, p. 159.

85. Such a bank was established by General Saxton—Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 143.

86. Off. Reds. Rebell., Series III, Vol. IV, pp. 1022-1023.

87. Acts and Resolutions, 38th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 99.

88. House Executive Documents, No. 70, 39th Congress, 1st Session.

89. The Advance, January 23, 1868. Proceedings of the Council of the Georgia Equal Rights Association, April 4, 1866. Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, by himself, p. 487.

90. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 122-123.

91. House Miscellaneous Documents, No. 16, 43rd Congress, 2nd Session, p. 91.

92. These facts were told me by old residents of Baltimore. Recollections do not always make good history, but their statements were analyzed and compared with one another, and the effort was made to construct a reliable account. The salient facts appear to be as they were given above. It is probable that there were similar organizations in other localities which were called forth by the same conditions.

93. The Freedmen's Record, Vol. IV, October, 1868.

94. Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, 1867, pp. 420-423.

95. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 80-130. Ibid., No. 6, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 42. Addresses and Ceremonies at the New Year's Festival to the Freedmen on Arlington Heights, pp. 5-6.

96. House Executive Documents, Vol. III, No. 50, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 726. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 15-16.

97. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 13.
98. National Freedmen, August 15, September 15, 1865. Proceedings of the Freedmen's Convention at Augusta, p. 30. American Freedmen, April, 1866, p. 13. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 92, 103, 164. Washington Evening Star, December 15, 1867. The Advance, January 9, 1868. Proceedings of the Colored People's Convention, November, 1865, together with the Declaration of Rights and Wrongs, an Address to the People; a Petition to the Legislature and a Memorial to Congress. Charleston, 1865.
99. See Third Semi-Annual Report on Schools for the Freedmen, January 1, 1867, by J. W. Alvord.
100. According to General Howard, over 200,000 persons had learned to read and write through the schools which were in existence during the three years prior to 1865—See Philadelphia Ledger, August 10, 1865.
101. Third Semi-Annual Report on Schools for the Freedmen, p. 83.
102. Senate Executive Documents, No. 2, 39th Congress, 1st Session, p. 25.
103. The Freedmen's Record, Vol. IV, December, 1865, p. 189.
104. Report of Hon. T. D. Eliot to the House of Representatives, March 10, 1868, p. 27. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 111-114. House Executive Documents, Vol. III, No. 50, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 729.
105. Senate Executive Documents, No. 27, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 114.
106. Third Semi-Annual Report on Schools for Freedmen, 1867, pp. 48-79.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLY ORGANIZATION OF NEGRO LABOR

THE movement for the national organization of labor began in the period immediately prior to the Civil War. There had been earlier efforts toward nationalization but these had ended in failure. The local unions were achieving success in many instances, but definite national aims were ill defined. The economic conditions under which the worker labored did not call for such an organization, but when free lands were occupied, when communication was made easier, when the industrial conditions of urban communities became oppressive, the workmen were stimulated to reform and protest, and the movement for national organization was begun. In 1850, the International Typographical Union was organized. At the same period a national convention of journeymen printers was formed in New York. The National Trade Association of Hat Finishers of the United States of America was formed in the same year; and a few years later, the Iron Moulders' Union of North America and the National Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths were organized. Other mechanics and tradesmen enlarged and developed this organization upon a national scale.

During the Civil War, the efforts of labor leaders for organization were redoubled in order to meet the problem of war and the adjustments which would be necessary when peace would be proclaimed. The number of unions increased rapidly during this period. In December, 1863, there were 79 unions, and in December, 1864, there were 270 unions. This period witnessed

a national organization of like magnitude. From 1863 to 1866, there were ten national unions formed, and at the close of this decade there were at least thirty-two national unions. There is every evidence that Negroes were not welcomed in these organizations and in some cases they were expressly excluded.¹

In 1864, an attempt was made to federate the various local unions and to form a national body. The International Industrial Assembly of North America was held in Louisville, Kentucky, in this year. A small number of delegates attended this convention, and resolutions concerning workingmen and labor conditions were adopted. No mention was made at this time of Negro workers.² Two years later, on August 20, 1866, at Baltimore, Maryland, the National Labor Union was organized with sixty delegates from local unions and trades' assemblies. A flag was unfurled from Rayston's building in which the union was to meet, and upon the flag there were the words, "Welcome to the Sons of Toil, from the North, South, East and West." An address was issued to workingmen of the United States setting forth the objects which were to be obtained by the organization. The resolutions called attention to the eight-hour day—the original purpose of the assembly—cooperative stores and associations, the organization of trade unions, the apprentice system, strikes, female labor, the public domain, and direct political action by labor organizations through the formation of a National Labor Party.³

Among the subjects presented in this address was the attitude which the National Labor Union should assume toward Negro Labor. It was stated at the outset that the working classes had "an abiding interest" in the successful solution of this part of the labor problem. While the committee expressed itself as not hoping to present an opinion which would meet

with universal approval, yet it would regard it as a dereliction of duty should the question be allowed to pass unnoticed. Aside from occasional mention as a slave, the Negro worker had been neglected, and the committee found that the cause of labor could be materially advanced by giving attention to this subject. The address stated that "the systematic organization and consolidation of labor must henceforth become the watchword of the true reformer. To accomplish this, the cooperation of the African race in America must be secured. If those most directly interested fail to perform this duty, others will avail themselves of it to their injury. Indeed a practical illustration of this was offered in the recent importation of colored caulkers from Portsmouth, Virginia, to Boston, Massachusetts, during the struggle on the Eight-Hour question."

In view of these facts, the workingmen were called upon to realize that the interests of labor were one, "that there should be no distinction of race or nationality; that there is but one dividing line—that which separates mankind into two great classes, the class that labors and the class that lives by others' labor." Not only did the address find cooperation with Negro labor necessary because of labor conditions themselves, but the Negroes were soon to be admitted to citizenship and would have the suffrage. Therefore, their strength at the ballot-box would be of great value to American labor. If American labor did not accept them, Capital would use them to bring about an antagonism between white and black labor, just as the Austrian Government had used the dissension of the races within its territory in order to maintain its existence. The address termed this situation a "lamentable" one, if it should be allowed to develop in America. It would result that labor would be warring against labor, and "Capital would be smiling and reaping the fruits of this mad contest." The organization of

trades unions, eight-hour leagues and other groups among Negroes was urged, and the succeeding Congress was requested to make a wise decision in the matter.

The next annual session of the National Labor Congress was held at Chicago, August 19, 1867. A large number of delegates attended. The opening address of President J. C. Whaley, commented upon the year's progress and treated a number of subjects in which labor was interested. He called special attention to the Negroes whose emancipation had given them a new position in the labor world. He stated that they would now begin to learn and to think for themselves, and they would enter the mechanical pursuits where they would come into competition with white labor. The best way, as he saw it, to deal with this situation was to form trades unions among them and then the Negroes would work in harmony with white men and learn the value of their labor.⁴

A committee of three on Colored Labor was selected, with A. W. Phelps of the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union of New Haven as chairman. This committee was instructed to prepare a report upon the subject. The report was made later by Mr. Phelps. It was stated that the subject was so involved, and there was such a variety of opinion among the members of the Congress, that it was inexpedient to take action on the subject. Accordingly a resolution was offered, which stated that the subject of Negro Labor should be laid over until the next session of the National Labor Union. This occasioned an extended discussion. A delegate from Maryland, Mr. Green, of the Pattern Makers' Union, Baltimore, stated that he knew as much about Negro labor as anyone. He remarked in conclusion that the last war had not been brought on by the slaveholders, but that they had been forced into it by the poor whites who had not

desired to be reduced to the Negro's level, and thus forced into competition with him. Mr. Peabody of the Eight-Hour League of Michigan was of the opinion that the Negroes should organize unions among themselves. Mr. Trevellick, of the Trades Assembly, Detroit, remarked that the Negroes should be taught their duty as members of the trades unions. The chairman, Mr. Phelps, replied that in New Haven, the Trades Unions could not be induced to admit the colored mechanics. Mr. Van Dorn, of the Boot and Shoemakers' Union, Chicago, thought that the Negroes should be admitted to the common brotherhood of laborers, for they were industrious and capable of advancement. Mr. Cathers, of the Carpenters' Union, Baltimore, said that he liked Negroes only in their places, and that they should form unions and assemblies for themselves.

Mr. Sylvis, of the Moulders' Union, Philadelphia, remarked that white labor and black labor were already in competition and he saw that the Negroes would not only take possession of some of the shops, but would cast their vote against white labor unless they were conciliated. This opinion was seconded by Mr. Peabody, who stated that the white bricklayers of Washington had gone on a strike and that Negroes had taken their places. While the question was urgent and should be met, yet he was of the opinion that Negroes would not want to enter the white Trades Unions any more than the Germans would try to enter the English Societies in America. Mr. Kykendall did not see why the question should arise, since the constitution which had been adopted on the day before made no mention of white men or black men. The discussion continued until the hour of adjournment at 6 P.M., on August 22, 1867.

On the next morning, the report of the committee was resubmitted by the Union. In the afternoon,

the committee reported a resolution, which was accepted later, that "the constitution already adopted by the Labor Congress precludes the necessity of any action of this body in behalf of any particular class of the laboring masses." This action closed the discussion on this subject for the remainder of the session.

On September 21, 1868, the National Labor Union assembled in New York City, with representatives from national, state and city labor organizations. The resolutions and the subjects of discussion included the eight-hour day, female labor, strikes, immigration, currency, politics, a government department of labor, and labor conditions. The admission of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton occasioned a heated discussion. A resolution was passed which looked forward to the formation of a National Reform Labor Party as an active political party, and another resolution ordered that all delegates from the South should be received. In this resolution, nothing was said of either color or sex. No mention of Negro labor seems to have been made at this session.⁵

The next session of the National Labor Union assembled at Philadelphia, August 16-23, 1869. There were 142 representatives who were present. Among these there were nine Negro Labor representatives who were the first Negro representatives in organized Labor. No objections appear to have been made to their reception. Their names and the associations which they represented were: H. H. Butler, Colored Engineers' Association; Isaac Myers, Colored Caulkers' Trades Union Society; Ignatius Gross, Colored Moulders' Union Society; James W. Hare, Colored Painters' Society. Five colored delegates from the United Laborers' and Hod Carriers' Association of Philadelphia were also admitted.⁶

The speech of the president called attention to Chinese labor as a menace to all workingmen; and he

urged the carrying out of the proposal at the Baltimore Congress that workingmen should cut loose from all political parties and form a National party. Resolutions were passed by the Congress condemning the importation of coolie labor, and not only was the idea of a political party endorsed but a platform for this party was also adopted.

A resolution was presented and adopted, stating that the National Labor Union would know "no north, south, east, west, neither color nor sex, on the question of the rights of labor." The colored delegates were urged in the same resolution to form organizations in all legitimate ways and send their delegates from every state in the Union to the next Congress. On the passage of this resolution, Mr. H. H. Butler, delegate from the Colored Engineers' Association, of Baltimore, Maryland, spoke in grateful terms of the reception of the representatives of Negro Labor. Mr. Isaac Myers, representing the Colored Caulkers' Trades Union Society, requested leave also to return thanks for the "unanimous recognition" of the Negro's right to representation in the Convention. He remarked that all that the four millions of his race desired was a fair chance, and no one would be the worse off for giving it. On the other hand, working together, the two groups would make one steady and strong pull for the laboring man of the country. He concluded his remarks with the declaration concerning what the Negro desired. Said he, "The white laboring men of the country have nothing to fear from the colored laboring men. We desire to see labor elevated and made respectable; we desire to have the highest rate of wages that our labor is worth; we desire to have the hours of labor regulated as well as to the interest of the laborer as to the capitalist. Mr. President, American citizenship for the black man is a com-

plete failure if he is proscribed from the workshops of the country." 7

A committee consisting of R. M. Adger, P. H. Brown, J. H. Thomas, James Roane and H. H. Butler was appointed to organize the colored workers of Pennsylvania into labor unions. This committee was to report its results to the President of the International Congress. Mr. Isaac Myers prior to this resolution had addressed the colored Hod-Carriers' Association of Philadelphia, and urged greater organization. He also predicted that the time was not far distant when white and colored workingmen would be working side by side.

From August 15 to August 22, 1870, the National Labor Union assembled at Cincinnati. Among the number of colored labor delegates who were present, there was Isaac Myers, of the National Colored Association, Baltimore, Maryland; Josiah Weare, of the United Hod-Carriers' and Laborers' Association, Philadelphia; Peter H. Clark, of the Colored Teachers' Cooperative Association of Cincinnati, Ohio.⁸ On the first day of the session, Mr. John M. Langston, a lawyer of Washington, D. C., and a professor of Law at Howard University, was present, and a motion was made that he should be admitted to the floor. The presiding officer ruled that the motion was out of order until the regular order of business was concluded. Mr. Myers and Mr. Clark were both appointed to the Committee on Platform.

At the second day's session a motion was made to extend to Mr. John M. Langston the privilege of the floor. This privilege had been extended to Hon. S. F. Cary, a Democratic ex-Congressman. When the motion was made to extend the privilege to Mr. Langston, a heated discussion was begun. Mr. Troup, a delegate from the State Labor Union of New York, stated that

Mr. Langston had endeavored to influence the Colored National Labor Congress of 1869 to vote for the Republican party, and he would urge the exclusion of any politician, Democrat or Republican from the Labor Convention. Mr. Cummings, of the State Labor Union of Massachusetts, said that Mr. Langston was at this session to interest it in the Republican party, and that he was an office holder under the Grant administration. Moreover, he added that Mr. Langston had done all that he could to separate white and colored workingmen in the interest of the Republican party.

A motion to lay this matter on the table was lost by a vote of 21 to 28. The motion to grant Mr. Langston the privilege of the floor was lost by the vote of 23 to 29. When the vote was announced, there was much excitement. Mr. Coffin, of Washington, made an appeal for Mr. Langston, remarking that he was regarded as "the champion of colored men." Mr. McLean of Boston said that he did not oppose Mr. Langston because he was a colored man, but because he regarded him as a "foe to the colored race." Mr. Weare, the colored delegate from Philadelphia, said that more objectionable men than Mr. Langston had been admitted to the sessions. Attention was called to the admission of Mr. Cary, a Democrat, and to the fact that Mr. Langston was a Republican. The Republican party, it was said, was always regarded as a friend of the workingman and there was no reason to prefer the one to the other. The party spirit was always present at this convention. Frequently the Republican and Democratic factions clashed on important points. Mr. Isaac Myers, colored delegate from Baltimore, read from manuscript a statement which lauded the Republican party as the friend of both white and colored workingmen. He was often interrupted during the reading of his prepared statement, and it was

concluded in the midst of cries of approval and disapproval.⁹ After some discussion, the vote to admit Mr. Langston was called for, but he was excluded by the vote of 23-29. A motion to admit Mr. Pinchback, colored Senator of Louisiana, was finally tabled.¹⁰

In spite of this action toward the Negro representatives, the convention adopted a platform which appeared to raise it above petty race prejudice. The action to exclude seems to have been based more largely upon a political basis rather than a race basis. In the platform, which was adopted later, there was a resolution condemning all discrimination on account of race, or color, nationality or previous condition. These were regarded as being "in direct violation of the fundamental principles of Republicanism." Another resolution was adopted after much debate stating that "the highest interest of our colored fellow-citizens is with the workingmen who, like themselves, are the slaves of capital and politicians."

The National Labor Union began losing ground after this session. Many trade organizations refused to appoint delegates to the sessions, which grew smaller in attendance. At the St. Louis Congress of 1871, only a small number of delegates attended. The political and industrial organizations were separated by calling the meeting of the National Labor Party at Columbus, Ohio, during February, 1872, and the meeting of the National Labor Union at Cleveland, Ohio, during September, 1872. The political meeting of the National Labor Party was largely attended by labor delegates, but the National Labor Union, in its industrial congress at Cleveland, on September 16, 1872, had only seven persons present. After this session the National Labor Union ceased to be active in labor circles, for it had fallen into the hands of the politicians who were using it to further their own objects.

The International Workingmen's Association began to organize workers on a large scale with the decline of interest in the National Labor Union. A parade of affiliated organizations was held in New York on September 13, 1871, and Negro labor organizations appeared for the first time among the internationals. However, the German Unions had received Negro workers as equals years before this organization, so that there were Negroes who were familiar with the Marxian theories and other radical questions.¹¹ Negro labor did not ignore the world aspect of the labor question. On the contrary, connection was sought with other National organizations through the international organization and by representation at international conferences. Reverend Sella Martin was appointed as a delegate from the National Labor Union of the United States, an independent Negro organization of national scope, to the World's Labor Congress, September, 1870, in Paris. Mr. Martin was selected because of his knowledge of the French language and for his broad view on labor problems.¹²

There were many local labor organizations which made discriminations against Negro workers. This action was based often upon color alone. In national organizations liberal resolutions might be adopted, but these were nullified in the actions of the local bodies. The assembly of the National Labor Union of the District of Columbia issued a call for a convention of delegates from the trade associations of the District of Columbia and Maryland on January 12, 1869. But the call specifically stated that "every white trade or labor society" was invited to send one delegate for each organization.¹³

In the actual day's work, discriminatory actions on the part of the Unions were evident. Four white union men who were found at work with Negro workers on garment work were unanimously expelled from

the Union.¹⁴ The Bookbinders' Union of the District of Columbia passed a resolution urging that a larger number of apprentices should be employed in the office of the Congressional Printer. They also insisted that the word "white" should be placed in the resolution. Mr. Clapp, the Congressional Printer, in a reply to the union said that he looked upon the battle of life as open to "every American citizen, old or young, white or colored, under the broad American principle that all men are created equal"¹⁵

In May, 1869, Lewis H. Douglass, a printer and a son of Frederick Douglass, was given work at the Government Printing Office, and immediately thereafter he made application to the Columbia Typographical Union for membership. When his application was presented at the meeting, it was claimed by some that he was a "rat," that is, that he had been rejected as an improper person by the Denver Union and that he had worked for less than union wages. A point of order was raised that the proper procedure in all cases was to refer the application to the committee on nominations for investigation and report. Amid great confusion, the point was sustained and the meeting adjourned in disorder. Before the second meeting which would receive the report of the Committee on Nominations, the National Typographical Union met at Albany, New York. A resolution was presented in this body censuring the Congressional Printer for hiring Mr. Douglass. Meanwhile the employer of Mr. Douglass in Denver certified that he had paid him union wages, and the Secretary of the Denver Union wrote that "he was no rat." There was then no real basis to the charges which had been brought against the applicant.

At a subsequent meeting of the Columbia Typographical Union, the report of the Committee on Nominations was presented. A majority of the com-

mittee recommended the admission of Mr. Douglass. A minority opposed his admission. A motion was made to lay the report on the table and it was carried, 229-164. An appeal was taken to the President of the International Typographical Union. The friends of Mr. Douglass proposed to form another national society founded on justice without regard to race or color, if the minority insisted upon their interpretation and if they found support in the national organization.¹⁶ The question of the admission of Mr. Douglass was left open through the summer of 1869. In November a resolution was offered in the Columbia Typographical Union that persons of African descent should be ineligible to membership, but it did not pass.¹⁷

Two other colored workers were employed at the Government Printing Office during this period—William A. Lavelette and Frederick Douglass, both compositors. By this time a sentiment had been created to allow these three persons to work without being members of the union until the time would come when their numbers would be sufficient to form a union for themselves.¹⁸ When the union met in January, 1870, a vote was taken, 167-121, to postpone considerations of these applications for one year.¹⁹ This action shows that the union would not face the issue at this time. It is interesting to note that one year later, when the applications were again presented, the union met and adjourned without action.²⁰ In Labor Conventions and in local organizations the Negro workingmen were either ignored or they were subject to discriminations which limited their action as workers.

This attitude of labor organizations and of workingmen was the leading cause for the formation of a separate national organization by Negroes. There is no evidence to support the broad generalization that

the Negroes "chose" of themselves to organize separately from the whites.²¹ They were compelled, as they had been on many occasions, by force of circumstances, to unite in order to protect themselves against those who would suppress them. There were three reasons for the separate organization of Negro labor: first, the attitude of the unions and of the workmen; second, differences in political views, and third, the influence of ambitious colored politicians. The discriminatory actions of several unions, the clashes growing out of the presence of Negro workers were the important factors in producing separation. Moreover, the political issues which were attractive to white workmen were of little immediate interest to Negroes. The Greenback agitation, the taxation of bonds, civil rights for southerners, and similar national questions were of no great and immediate importance to persons recently freed from slavery. Education, The Freedmen's Bureau, equal rights for black and white workmen and the occupation of the western lands were more closely related to the Negro's welfare. The Republican party was regarded by the Negroes as the party which was responsible for their liberation, and it seemed that it was possibly his moral duty to support this party. For this reason, the Negro leaders resented the bitter attacks which were made by the white labor organizations against the Republican Party. The political leaders of the Negroes knew that they would have scant opportunity to force themselves to the front in the mixed organizations. Consequently those who were ambitious politically, were very willing to encourage the formation of separate organizations.

The first successful attempt which was made by the Negroes to organize in a national way after the war, was made at a national convention in Washington, January 1869. About 130 delegates from every state

in the Union were present. It was observed that they were a group of "able representatives,"²² and that "the appearance—intelligence and ability—excite general commendation."²³ The convention assembled in Union League Hall, January 13, 1869.²⁴ It was called to order by William Nesbit of Pennsylvania, who read the call to the convention. Henry M. Turner of Georgia was elected temporary chairman and A. S. Green of Pennsylvania was elected secretary. A committee on credentials was appointed. It consisted of one representative from each state. Addresses were made by Rev. H. H. Garnett and Frederick Douglass. The latter said he had come more as a listener, in order to learn how the brethren in the South felt toward public questions. Others speakers were John M. Langston, William H. Day, Rev. Sella Martin, and A. M. Powell, editor of *The Anti-Slavery Standard*.

After these addresses, the permanent officers of the convention were elected unanimously as follows: Frederick Douglass, of New York, President; Vice-Presidents: A. S. Green of Pennsylvania, W. T. Jones of Delaware, J. J. Spelman of New York, E. D. Bassett of Pennsylvania, F. G. Barbadoes of Massachusetts, W. T. Waugh of Rhode Island, J. Sella Martin of New York, O. S. O. Wall of Ohio, H. H. Garnett of Pennsylvania, W. Sorrell of Maryland, W. H. Gibson of Kentucky, R. P. Baptist of Illinois, Alexander Clark of Iowa, A. Howard of West Virginia, T. W. Skinner of Mississippi, T. W. Long of Florida, George Nelson of North Carolina, Fields Cook of Virginia, J. C. Tate of Tennessee, W. H. Day of Delaware, W. E. Middleton of New Jersey, Charles Langston of Kansas, James Sims of Georgia and John F. Cook of the District of Columbia.²⁵ This list of Vice-Presidents indicates how representative, as to sections of the country, this convention was.

On the second day, various resolutions were intro-

duced. Several concerned the Freedmen's Bureau and other voluntary organizations which were engaged in elevating and improving the Negroes. One resolution recognized in these efforts, however ridiculous they may have seemed to a large number, "a feeble but honest acknowledgment of a great debt justly due and of long standing, contracted by centuries of ignorance, for which, unhappily no adequate atonement can be made though the whole South were now covered with school houses and supplied with teachers by a tax levied upon the property of the whole nation." Other resolutions dealt with universal suffrage, a military academy, equal rights, the opening of lands in the West and especially in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida. Opposition to colonization was expressed, and the Reconstruction policy of Congress was commended.²⁶

At the third day's session, resolutions were introduced recommending the establishment of manual labor schools and the formation of a national league to promote industry, temperance, order, and good feeling throughout the nation. On the fourth day, an address to the colored people of the United States was read, touching such subjects as education, habits of industry, frugality, agriculture, manufacture, mechanical pursuits, saving funds and ownership of land.²⁷

This convention was not called as a labor convention and it cannot be ranked as such. It was concerned principally with political matters. Above all else, its main purpose was to indicate its allegiance to the Republican party. There were preachers, bishops, politicians and local leaders of every walk of life in attendance. Interesting comments were passed upon the appearance and the work of the convention. Sympathetic admirers compared the convention with Congress and the State Legislatures. *The Daily Morning Chronicle* compared Frederick Douglass, the presiding

officer, with John C. Breckinridge while in the Vice-Presidential chair, and it was found that they compared favorably in ability and dignity.²⁸

While the convention was political in its purposes, it was not without influence upon the labor conditions. The Negroes with other labor groups realized that there was a close connection between politics and labor. While the whites were actually putting forward candidates and forming a political party, the Negroes were endeavoring to secure the franchise and educational advantages. *The New Era* of Washington, a Negro newspaper, declared that the franchise would "lubricate the corroded hinges upon which swing wide open the portals of the temple of industry, closed against the Northern Colored Man's right to labor, and which can only be opened by the talismanic word of two syllables, viz.: the ballot." Because of such expressions, it was claimed at this time, and at later periods, that the Negroes did not want to work and that what they wanted was the ballot; and that they were turning from work to politics.²⁹ This assertion is not supported by the facts. Negro workmen were interested in politics, as the convention of January, 1867, shows, but other facts show the same activities among white workmen. All American workmen believed that there was a direct connection between labor and politics.

The Colored Republican State Central Committee with representatives from 21 counties and from all wards of Baltimore, met in session on September 14, 1869 and passed resolutions urging the Negroes of the State to enter the movement for the formation of labor unions and cooperative protective labor and trade associations in the counties. It was stated that this type of organization would aid in the elevation and protection of the industrial classes.³⁰ With this encouragement to Negro labor, one need not be surprised

that there was close connection between Negro labor and the Republican Party—even if the encouragement was merely for political purposes. An Educational Convention assembled in Louisville, Kentucky, on July 18, 1869. There were 250 delegates in attendance. The subjects which were discussed were political and economic as well as educational. They included the abolition of the relics of slavery, equal education, the rights of the courts, equal taxation, the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, and the purchase of real estate. It was also recommended that the youth of the race should learn trades and engage in agriculture and mechanical pursuits.³¹ In the same year a meeting of Negro workmen in Baltimore decided to issue a call for a National Labor Convention as a separate convention of their own number in Washington during the month of December. It is interesting to note that while this separation was urged, delegates were also appointed to the annual convention of American labor interests at Philadelphia on August 16.³²

A group of Negroes representing the several trades met at Douglass Institute in Baltimore, on July 19, 1869, in order to effect a central state organization. This was the first State Labor Convention among Negroes of which there is authentic record. The call for the convention was circulated by newspapers, churches and organizations. Isaac Myers, a Baltimore caulker, was called to the chair, but on his nomination of James Morris, the latter was elected temporary chairman. Wesley Howard was elected temporary Secretary. After prayer, Isaac Myers stated that the object of the meeting was to organize the Negro mechanics of the city and state. He showed how the white mechanics had formed trade unions and then refused to allow colored men to work in the same trades. Therefore, according to his view of the situation, Negro workmen must organize for protection.

He argued for unity of action and stated that the franchise without the organization of labor would be of little benefit.³³

The permanent officers who were elected were Isaac Myers, President; Ignatius Gross and W. L. James, Vice-Presidents; J. C. Fortie, Recording Secretary; James Morris, Treasurer. An Executive Committee selected from each trade was chosen as follows: Reuben Gearing, tanner; William E. Wilkes, cooper; George Myers, caulker; Peter Nelson, blacksmith; James Cornish, shipbuilder; Moses Jennings, house carpenter; Daniel Davis, engineer and machinist; Thomas J. Harris, bricklayer; J. W. Goldsborough, cabinetmaker; George Grason, brickmaker; Henson Williams, tinner; Ignatius Gross, iron molder; Charles Cornish, wheelwright; Samuel Hyer, block- and pump-maker; John H. Tabb, hatter; Richard Griffin, cigar-maker; Samuel Caution, sail-maker; William Tidings, silversmith; Daniel Finley, coopersmith; James Jackson, stovemaker; S. C. Brown, shoemaker.³⁴

This committee is representative of the trades of the city of Baltimore and reveals the fact that the Negroes in 1867 were continuing to hold a prominent place in skilled labor. Another indication of this condition in the same city may be gleaned from a description of a parade in celebration of emancipation. There were numerous organizations of mechanics, and several beneficial and military organizations in the line of march. There were, representing Negro labor, such organizations as the Colored Butchers' Association which comprised about sixty persons, the Chesapeake Marine Railway Employees, the Caulkers' Association, Hod-Carriers' Society, Draymen, Carters' and Wagoners' Association, The Colfax Club, which carried banners with the caption, "By Industry, We Thrive," the Oyster Openers, the employees of the Calvert Sugar Refinery and the Colored Brickmakers'

Association. Two interesting features of this parade were, a miniature representation of the Northern Central Railway Grain Elevator which was followed by a train of employees, dressed in red shirts and carrying shovels; and a large platform car upon which brick-makers made brick as they passed.³⁵ It would appear that in this city Negro labor was well organized in the separate trades.

The Negro workers of New York met at Zion Church, on November 11, 1869, in order to select the delegates who should represent them at the National Labor Convention in Washington. The delegates who were present represented fifty engineers, four hundred waiters, seven basket-makers, thirty-two tobacco twist-ers, fifty barbers, twenty-two cabinetmakers and carpenters, fourteen masons and bricklayers, fifteen smelters and refiners, two rollers, six moulders, porters, five hundred longshoremen and twenty-four printers.³⁶ In Washington, D. C., the colored workmen formed an association for mutual protection, and they were preparing to cooperate with the other organizations in the formation of a national organization.³⁷ At Baltimore, the Negro bricklayers had formed a cooperative association, which was known as "the First Baltimore Bricklayers' Association." This organization was incorporated under the laws of Maryland and it was empowered to issue \$5,000 worth of stock. The cooperative plan, upon which it was based, had enabled it to be of great benefit to its members.³⁸

Public meetings were held in the interest of Negro labor organization. A meeting which was largely attended was held at Sharp Street M. E. Church, Baltimore, by the State Union Labor Society. Frederick Douglass was the principal speaker. He used as his subject: "The Equal Right of All Men to Labor."³⁹ An enthusiastic meeting was held in Room 24 of Cooper Institute, New York City, on October 22,

1869, and another meeting was held in Zion Church on October 28, in order to consider the labor situation among Negroes and to send delegates to the Negro Labor Union Convention at Washington in December.⁴⁰ At Bethel Church, New York City, on November 16, 1869, the Colored Men's and Women's Labor Reform Union held a meeting. There were two prominent speakers: State Senator A. A. Bradley of Georgia and Mr. Troup of the National Labor Union which had held its convention in Philadelphia in August. Mr. Troup stated that he was aware of the presence of color prejudice among white workingmen and that there was a difference of opinion among them concerning the introduction of Negroes into white labor organizations. He was in New York, he stated, in order to push forward the interests of colored workingmen's associations. Senator Bradley spoke of the need of labor organizations among the members of his race. Near the close of his speech, he began a political discussion which soon ended the consideration of the labor question.⁴¹ Similar appeals for the organization of Negro labor were made at a State Labor Convention, in South Carolina. It was proposed also to memorialize the legislature for the protection of labor contracts and to describe publicly the low wages and oppressive economic conditions among Negro workers.⁴²

The call for the National Labor Convention of Negroes was widely circulated through newspapers and churches during the months immediately prior to the convention. The printed call invited the Negro laborers of the country to meet at Union League Hall in Washington, on the first Monday in December, 1869, in order to consider the condition of Negro labor throughout the United States and to begin steps for the improvement of labor conditions. The call was issued by Isaac Myers, whose name had been connected

with the organization of Negro labor from the first.⁴³ He was the great pioneer of organized Negro labor. He started in life as an apprentice ship's caulker and within four years was advanced to the position of superintendent of caulkers. His name soon became a watchword among Negro laborers who desired national organization. His call for a gathering of Negro workers met a ready response. As the movement gathered headway, it was apparent to some observers that it would be "the largest in point of numbers, influence and intelligence of any similar body of colored men ever assembled in this country."⁴⁴ On the eve of the convention, *The Daily Morning Chronicle* urged the convention not to be satisfied with retaliation against the white labor conventions for the way in which they had ignored or discriminated against Negro workers. But they were advised to stick to the labor question and to abandon "the economic fads" which had been the cause of the failure of white organizations.⁴⁵

On December 6, 1869, the National Labor Convention of Colored Men assembled at Union League Hall, Washington, D. C. One hundred fifty-six delegates from every section of the country were present on the opening day. The convention was called to order by Isaac Myers, who spoke of the object of the convention and urged the cooperation of all delegates in the success of the movement. Mr. George T. Downing of Rhode Island was then chosen temporary chairman and Mr. H. S. Harman, Recording Secretary. Mr. William U. Sanders of Nevada made the motion for the appointment of a committee on credentials of one delegate from each state and territory. The delegates who had been elected were from Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Tennessee,

Ohio, Kentucky, Connecticut, New Jersey, Nevada and Michigan.

While the committee was organizing its report, Mr. James H. Harris addressed the convention. He stated that several millions of colored men were looking to the convention with much interest, and that the South, having passed through a political reconstruction, needed another reconstruction in the affairs of the laboring classes. Mr. John M. Langston spoke of the treatment of Negroes in public places and at their work. He especially scored the Printers' Union for its action toward Mr. Lewis H. Douglass. Remarks were made also by Mr. Richard Trelvellick, the President of the National Labor Convention, and Mr. A. M. Powell, the editor of *The Anti-Slavery Standard*.

The convention was permanently organized with Mr. James M. Harris of North Carolina as President. Committees were appointed on education, finance, business, platform and address, female labor, homesteads, travel, temperance, cooperative labor, bank savings, and agriculture. The platform of the convention covered the following subjects: (1) The Dignity of Labor, (2) A plea that harmony should prevail between labor and capital, (3) The desirability of an interchange of views between employers and employees, (4) Temperance, (5) Education, "for educated labor is more productive and commands higher wages," (6) Political liberty for all Americans, (7) The encouragement of industry, (8) The exclusion from the trades and workshops regarded as "an insult to God and an injury to us," (9) Immigrant labor, which should be welcomed and coolie labor which was an injury to all working classes, (10) The establishment of cooperative workshops, building and loan associations, (11) Gratitude to the agencies interested in Negro education, (12) Protection of the law for all, (13) The organization of workingmen's associations which

should cooperate with the National Labor Union, (14) Capital, which was not to be regarded as the natural enemy of labor.⁴⁶

At the third day's session, a special committee of five was appointed to draft a plan for the organization of mechanics and artisans, for the purpose of securing recognition for them in the workshops of the country. Mr. Langston addressed the meeting concerning his observations in the South. There he had found skilled workers among the Negroes in gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, brick, mortar and the arts. He stated that all these workmen were asking, for themselves and their children, was that the trades should be open to them and that no avenue of industry should be closed, whether in workshops, printing offices, factories, foundries, railroads, steamboats, warehouses or stores.⁴⁷

On the fifth day, a resolution was passed which urged the delegates to call and organize state labor associations so that they might work in full cooperation with a committee which was to conduct its work as a Labor Bureau. This bureau was planned to serve as a clearing house for all questions of Negro labor and it was to aid in opening new labor opportunities. Isaac Myers was selected permanent President of the organization and in his acceptance he stated that he expected to rely upon the Labor Bureau in reaching the Negro workingmen of the United States.⁴⁸

It is interesting to note that this convention was more representative of the labor groups than the first general convention and it deserves for this reason, as well as for its work, to be called the first organized national group of Negro laborers. Many political and religious leaders were not present at its sessions. This absentee number included Douglass, Garnett, William Wells Brown, Purvis and Whipper. The definite results of this meeting included the organiza-

tion of a permanent Labor Union and a Bureau of Labor. Before the sessions were ended it was stated that there were 23 states represented and 203 accredited delegates in attendance during the period of five days, December 6-10, 1870.⁴⁹

The office of the National Bureau of Labor was established in Washington. In February, 1870, an address was issued from the office to the colored people of the United States. The address stressed the need of organizing Negro labor in the states. It was the lack of organization, it was stated, which caused Negro labor to be poorly remunerated. The purposes of the National Labor Union and particularly the Bureau of Labor were (1) to encourage and superintend the organization of labor, (2) to bring about legislation which would secure equality before the law for all and enforce the contracts for labor, (3) to secure funds from bankers and capitalists for aid in establishing cooperative associations, (4) to overcome the opposition of white mechanics who excluded workers from their unions and shops, (5) to organize state labor conventions, (6) to organize, where there were seven or more mechanics, artisans and laborers of any particular branch of industry, separate labor associations and to advertise their labor in the daily papers, (7) to encourage independent effort in creating capital, buying tools, building houses, forging iron, making brick, and (8) to own a homestead. The address was signed by Isaac Myers, President; G. T. Downing, Vice-President; W. V. Sanders and L. H. Douglass, Secretaries.⁵⁰

Local organization meetings were held in several places, either by the officers of the National Labor Union or under their influence. *The New Era*, a weekly newspaper, had been selected and endorsed as the proper exponent of the objects of the Union, and

through its pages efforts to encourage organizations were maintained. On February 21, 1870, a large gathering of both races met in Washington to consider a proposal for sending an agent into the South in order to organize Negro labor. This plan was accepted and Mr. Isaac Myers, the President of the National Labor Union, was designated.⁵¹ In pursuit of these objects, a large meeting was held by Mr. Myers, in Norfolk, Virginia, April 18, 1870. At this meeting it was urged that wherever possible, the colored and white workmen in the same trade should organize together. In Mr. Myers' words, the day had passed "for the establishment of organizations based upon color." Nevertheless, the National Labor Union was endorsed, and the mechanics of Norfolk were called to meet on the following Monday, and the laborers on the following Tuesday.⁵² The New York Colored Labor Convention was the result of the same influences. It met for its sessions at Saratoga, New York, with large numbers in attendance.⁵³ A meeting to organize the laborers of the District of Columbia was held in Metropolitan Hall, Washington, D. C., April 11, 1870. This meeting was attended by mechanics who represented many industries. The National Labor Union was endorsed, and labor organizations and industry were encouraged. Mr. Myers in addressing the meeting described the real necessity for organization, and he believed if this were not done, that the trades would pass from the hands of the Negroes and that they would become "the servants, the sweepers of shavings, the scrapers of pitch and carriers of mortar." His experience had demonstrated that the white mechanics of the North and the South were organized, and, because they were organized, they could soon exterminate unorganized Negro labor. He advised the formation of cooperative associations,

and pointed with pride to the colored shipyard in Baltimore, and the cooperative associations of carpenters, brickmasons and plasterers in Richmond.⁵⁴

The call for the second annual meeting of the National Labor Union was issued during the month of November. It was addressed "To the Colored Workingmen of the United States, Trades, Labor and Industrial Unions." The date of the meeting was set for January 9, 1871. On the opening day, delegates were in attendance from Alabama, Missouri, The District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Rhode Island, New York, Texas, Michigan, Massachusetts, and North Carolina.

The address of the President, Mr. Isaac Myers, covered the subjects of capital and labor, trades unions and strikes, the right of labor to organize, cooperation, the establishment in every city of a Bureau of Industry composed of representatives of all industrial and trade organizations for the discussion of labor questions, and the accumulation of statistics. He stressed the importance of a tariff for the protection of American industry, national education, Chinese labor, "the reign of terror at the South," and immigration. He gave reasons for the existence of the National Labor Union and stated that the Negroes had no desire for a separate organization which was based on color. On the contrary, he was certain that "the condition of the white laborers will be materially advanced by a cooperation with the colored laborers."⁵⁵

Frederick Douglass addressed the convention and spoke of his sympathy with workingmen. He said that 36 years ago he had worked in a shipyard and that at that time the white workers did not care to work with a colored boy. Recently, because of the same condition, he stated, he had received word from nine men in the same shipyard asking for aid in securing work

in Washington. Each delegate was then allowed to speak for ten minutes on the state of the freedmen in each state.

Several important resolutions were passed in the convention. By one a Cooperation Committee was to be appointed, which was to encourage those who were engaged in manufacture to become more useful and enterprising. A second resolution provided for a memorial to Congress for a national system of education in which there would be technical education in special industries so as to meet the needs for artisans.⁵⁶ A third was passed which was to bring about the appointment of delegates with the power of establishing labor unions in Maryland, Illinois, North Carolina, Georgia, New York, Kentucky, Virginia, Delaware, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, West Virginia, Mississippi, New Jersey, Wyoming, Ohio, The District of Columbia, Rhode Island, Indiana, Michigan, Arkansas, Connecticut and Iowa. A fourth resolution was presented which stated that the convention desired to see mills, shops, farms and factories of every kind in the United States, and that they recognized the evil of chattel slavery, in that it confined the South to a few select staples and in so doing actually created "ignorance and poverty, not only among the slaves, but the majority of the nominally free people irrespective of race." The expectation was, that varying the industry of the South would help to elevate and develop the character and power of the people in this section of the country.⁵⁷

The following were selected as officers for the next year: Frederick Douglass, President; Bishop Languen of New York, First Vice-President; F. G. Barbadoes of Massachusetts, Recording Secretary; Lewis H. Douglass, Secretary; Anthony Bowen, Treasurer.

The President urged the delegates of the convention to organize committees in their localities so that five hundred persons might be present next year.

During the period between the conventions, efforts were made to organize and protect colored workingmen. From February 22 to February 25, 1871, a state convention assembled in Nashville, Tennessee. One of its important actions was a memorial to Congress and the President of the United States describing the crimes which were committed against the Negroes, and the danger to them from such secret societies as the Pale Faces or the Ku Klux Klan, Farmer's Clubs, and Agricultural Societies, who by united action controlled and depreciated the labor of colored men. It was said that there were many Negro artisans and mechanics who were without employment, and if homes would be provided on the unoccupied lands they would go to them. Laborers were promised wages, or a share of the crops it was stated, but the employer often framed an excuse when the time came to pay.⁵⁸ A call was issued for a meeting of the Laborers' Union Association of the state of Texas, at Houston, on June 18, 1871. Robert Nelson, in pursuance of his duty as an agent of the National Labor Union of the United States, issued the invitation. All persons of both races were invited. The motto was, "There is labor sufficient for all, and all are invited to attend."⁵⁹ Similar conventions were called in Alabama, in Missouri and in Georgia.⁶⁰

The effect of the organization of Negro labor upon labor conditions was the same as among white workingmen. There is one instance during this period in which an organization secured an increase of wages by its united action. On June 26, 1871, the longshoremen of Baltimore met and organized the Longshoremen's Association No. 1, and it was proposed to incorporate it with the National Labor Union. The

object of the meeting, as stated by the speakers, was to improve conditions among the longshoremen. They desired an increase in wages from twenty cents per hour to twenty-five cents per hour. They desired, also, that the master stevedores abandon the practice of extra work without pay, and that a better time system be established. A committee was appointed to carry the wage grievance to the master stevedores.⁶¹ A subsequent meeting was called for July 25 in order to receive the report of the committee. It was reported that the following statement was given to the "boss stevedores":

Sir—At a meeting of the Longshoremen, held June 20th, 1871, the undersigned were appointed a committee to petition the stevedores to advance our wages from twenty to twenty-five cents per hour, the present rates being insufficient to support ourselves and families. Believing we have your sympathy, we respectfully ask your signatures,

Respectfully your obedient servants,

W. B. LAMSON
BENJAMIN SMITH
J. M. POWELL.

We, the undersigned, agree to pay the men in our employ twenty-five cents per hour: (signed)

A. RICHTER
PHI HERRMAN
A. COOPER
GEORGE EMORY

R. B. SORRELL
JOSEPH GUNTHER
GEORGE SHAEFFER
WILLIAM DE GOEY

B. L. BROWN⁶²

A vote of thanks was passed by the meeting to those who signed, and contempt was expressed for those who did not sign. Mr. Myers congratulated them upon their manly action. A resolution also requested that the practice of having "rumsellers" act as paymasters for longshoremen be abolished. Thus the Negroes were learning to use their organization

as effectively in their own interest as the white organizations were.

The next annual meeting of the National Labor Union was called by the National Bureau of Labor to meet in the city of Columbia, South Carolina, in October, 1871, at the time of the Southern Convention which was a political gathering. The call was sent out by Frederick Douglass, President, and Lewis H. Douglass, Secretary.⁶³ Good results were expected from this meeting in the South. But one correspondent to *The National Era*, which was the national organ of the National Labor Union, desired to know the object of these meetings. He wanted to know if this Union was another name for Communism, or if it was a colored offshoot of the international, which would eventually bring about the rule of mobocracy in America.⁶⁴ Quite naturally, there were those who would associate labor organizations with politics as well as with radicalism. Nevertheless, the movement continued to make headway.

The convention at Columbia assembled on October 18, 1871, with H. M. Turner, presiding. Committees were appointed on education and labor, on address to the American people, on printing, finance, civil rights, organization, immigration and on Southern outrages. The committee on the address made a report which called for political rights, justice, protection of the courts, and advancement in the industrial arts. The appeal was made to open the trades and workshops of the country to colored workers, or there would arise a large body of workmen who were ready to supply the labor market with only "poor work at cheap rates."⁶⁵ In the following year, a Southern States Convention assembled at New Orleans. The session was opened on April 10, 1872, with Frederick Douglass presiding. It was political in the main, endorsing General Grant, and appealing

for civil rights, political privileges and education.⁶⁶

It is apparent, perhaps, as we have traced the rise of the National Labor Union, that it was steadily becoming political in its influences and its leadership. There was less of the leadership of Myers and Downing and more of the leadership of Douglass and Turner. Reports were made to show the Negro laboring classes just what could be done by political organizations. Frederick Douglass prepared an editorial which endeavored to show that a political organization could relieve hardships and unbar the gate of progress. The article concluded with the words, "The Republican Party is the true workingmen's party of the country."⁶⁷

While the original labor leaders sought to keep the labor organizations separate from radical politics, yet they encouraged loyalty to the Republican Party. On April 1, 1872, the National Labor Union issued an address to the State Labor Unions of the United States, stating that the Colored National Labor Union was not a political organization; that its object was to develop and improve the intellectual and material condition of its membership; that the Labor Reform Party had no connection with the National Labor Union; and yet it was regarded as the duty of every colored man to be interested in the convention of the Republican Party at Philadelphia, on June 5th, and then to stand by its platform and candidates. The report concluded, concerning the Republican Party, "by its success, we stand; by its defeat, we fall. To that party we are indebted for the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, the homestead law, the eight-hour law and an improved educational system." The presidents of the state labor unions were directed to read this address before their organizations. It was signed by Isaac Myers, President, and F. G. Barbadoes, Secretary.⁶⁸

Other leaders endeavored to persuade the Negroes

of the country not to follow the Republican Party with a blind loyalty. A State Convention assembled at Chilicothe, Ohio, August 22, 1873. The chairman, John Booker, in opening the convention, took the Republican Party to task for believing that it had a right to demand that Negroes should act with it, whether it was right or wrong in principles. He asserted that Negroes would support the Republican Party only so long as it was right. A resolution was passed in which the Negro voters were directed to refrain from pledging themselves to any party and to use their own judgment in voting for candidates.⁶⁹ A convention in New York, during the previous month, had urged the Negroes to "cut loose" from the Republican Party which had used them so long "to pull the chestnuts out of the fire."⁷⁰ This advice seemed to have been followed prior to this period, for in some places, particularly at Savannah, Georgia, in the election of the Mayor and Alderman, the Negroes voted the Democratic ticket and in Texas, a Negro Democratic Convention was called.⁷¹

Political connections and influences caused the early organization of Negro Labor to fail in the same way as the white organizations failed. Slowly political leadership secured its hold and the organizations soon lost their efficiency. The leaders themselves often encouraged this situation. On May 17, 1874, *The New National Era*, of which Frederick Douglass was editor, carried an editorial upon the subject—"The Folly, Tyranny and Wickedness of Labor Unions." The editorial described in detail that which was regarded as the mischievous influence of trades unions upon the industrial interests of the country. This editorial was written when both the white and the colored labor unions had failed, and the influence of their failure had caused other newspapers to assume this position. W. U. Turner, who was the state agent for the

National Labor Union for Alabama, attempted to answer this argument. He objected to the classification of all labor unions as tyrannical and unworthy. In Alabama, the labor union had found the Negroes unorganized and in a deplorable state of ignorance. The labor union had given them a chance for organization, and he claimed that it was now supplying a want which had been felt for a long time. The editor of *The New National Era*, in his reply, congratulated the Labor Union of Alabama for its work, and concluded by advising it to steer clear of the demagogues who would soon destroy its good influence.⁷²

The early organization of Negro labor was of two kinds: (1) organization of Negro labor by white associations, and (2) the independent organization of labor by the Negroes themselves. Both efforts failed to unite the Negro workingmen into any permanently successful organization. In accomplishing this result, politics, racial barriers and misguided leadership were fundamental factors.

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CHAPTER VII

THE PERIOD OF ECONOMIC TRANSITION

WHEN the Civil War closed in 1865, the Negro population in the South, as a group, formed the submerged and dependent element of the American people. It is evident from the preceding pages that there were individual Negroes, especially in the North, who had made themselves free, from the economic point of view, prior to the beginning of the war. But the masses were slaves not only to others but to themselves and also to their environments. They had been accustomed to the direction of the master in their daily tasks, but with freedom, they were suddenly left to themselves. They had not experienced in a direct way the search for food, clothing and shelter, for usually these necessities had been provided for them. At the close of the War an adjustment was required which placed upon each person the responsibility of securing his own provision. Moreover, accustomed by years of toil to the requirement of forced labor, in days of freedom the tendency, quite naturally, was to begin a period of enjoyment. How brief this period was in the Negro life has been noted in the chapter, "Will the Negro Work?" Rapidly the Negroes settled down to the task of creating an economic basis for themselves. Not only would they work, now that they had secured their physical freedom, but they would begin the steps which lead toward a more complete economic freedom.

Prior to the emancipation of the Negroes, there had been frequent prophecies that there would be

turned loose upon the country a host of persons who would soon become the paupers and dependents of American society. Instead of this situation, observers found the Negroes at work, and it was discovered that there were not as many beggars among them in America as there were among the population of Europe. Horace Greeley asserted that they were in as good condition as the hired workers of the soil in any European country.¹ General Wade Hampton found that they were making constant and marked improvement each year, but he would not agree that they had yet attained the same efficiency which they had possessed in former periods.² By 1871, the cotton crop, which had remained the principal staple of the South, largely through Negro free labor and improved cultivation, had grown to be equal to the average of the four years prior to the war.³ Under slave labor from 1857 to 1861 there were produced 18,230,738 bales of cotton. Under free labor, from 1878 to 1882, there were produced 27,667,367 bales, or a balance of 9,436,639 on the side of free labor.⁴ Some of this labor was performed by white workers, but the great bulk of southern agricultural labor still came from the Negro group.

The results in the state of South Carolina, where there were Negroes in large numbers, showed a marked improvement for free labor over slave labor. In 1849 and 1859 there were raised with slave labor in South Carolina, 654,313 bales of cotton. In 1879 and 1882, 1,153,306 bales of cotton were raised—a difference of 498,993 bales. The wheat crop of 1859 in this state was 1,285,631 bushels, and in 1882 the crop was 2,973,600 bushels—a balance of 1,687,969 bushels in favor of free labor. In 1859, the crop of oats was 936,974 bushels and in 1882 it was 8,094,600—a balance of 7,057,262 bushels. In accounting for this improvement *The Boston Herald* stated that “free

labor, protected in its rights, improved transportation, better fertilization and culture and the subdivision of the lands are at the bottom of this wonderful growth."⁵ Year by year, the Negroes who had once been slave laborers were giving new proofs that they deserved their freedom. They had worked well in the slave gang system and they were working with greater efficiency in the free group and the individual systems of labor.

During the years succeeding the Civil War, the Negro workers continued to come into competition with white laborers through foreign immigration. Various parts of the South seemed to possess in advance the knowledge that the experiment with Negro free labor was certain to fail. The Negroes would be unreliable and unprofitable when they labored as free men.⁶ In the communities where such sentiments were expressed, voices from the press and the platform were used to encourage the emigration of Europeans. In truth, according to this point of view, the material interests of the South could be promoted, and its civilization preserved only in this way. Attempts were made, therefore, to employ white immigrant labor in the place of Negro labor.

This statement of distrust was not the only force which was operating against Negro workers; in some places, the need of additional workers was brought on by the movements of the Negro population. These movements from rural to urban centers, which characterized the period after the Civil War, had made a dearth of Negro labor in some places. Negroes were sought but they could not be found; often the industrious had migrated leaving only the indolent, and the latter had proved to be unprofitable workers. Some planters preferred to use Negro laborers. It was said that they were accustomed to the South and to the southern economic system, and, moreover, the southern

people were accustomed to them. Foreign laborers would not satisfy certain elements in the South, and many of this group protested against the introduction of a foreign element when there was an adequate labor supply just at hand.⁷

However, the popular demands for additional labor did not remain unheeded by legislators. Immediately after the Civil War, legislative action to aid immigration was begun. The South Carolina Legislature, in the December session of 1866, passed an act for "the encouragement and protection of European Immigration and for the appointment of a commissioner and agents." The sum of \$10,000 was appropriated for the use of the commissioner and his agents. An office was also maintained in Charleston.⁸ The Legislature of Alabama incorporated a German Immigration Association for the purpose of attracting Germans to the state.⁹ Charters were issued to several societies by the Legislature of Virginia during the session of 1865-1866.¹⁰

Immigration societies were formed for profit, and advertisements were placed in the northern newspapers. Some of these advertisements read like the old slave advertisements. The immigrants would be delivered to the planters at a fixed price per head, and they would be guaranteed to be good laborers.¹¹ Immigrant aid societies were formed in several states. At Charleston, a society was organized on the joint-stock plan. In Arkansas and Texas organized efforts were made to introduce foreign workers;¹² and in Georgia, the Georgia Land and Immigration Company was formed in 1865, and in the next year the Georgia Immigration Company was organized.¹³

Immigrants were coming to America, but the efforts to attract them to the South were not as successful as the organizers of the movement had hoped. The presence of Negro laborers was regarded by some observ-

ers as the cause of the indifferent attitude toward the South and the preference for the West. It is equally probable that the poor economic condition of the South, when it was contrasted with the bright economic opportunities of the West, gave weight to the decision of a future location.

The suggestion was made not only for the employment of white European laborers to replace and to supplement the colored workers, but also to import the Chinese coolies, who were less expensive to the employers than either the Negroes or the Europeans. Arguments were waged for and against the efficiency of this system of labor. They were being imported for labor upon the Pacific Railroad and it was thought that they could be used to advantage upon the plantation. Accordingly, plans were made to introduce these workers in large numbers.¹⁴ They were brought into Louisiana, Arkansas, and into other parts of the South, for agricultural purposes and to work upon the railroads. They were seen working with Negro laborers on the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad.¹⁵ It was reported that a contract had been let for a supply of 20,000 Chinese laborers for the plantations of Tennessee and another force of 25,000 was bound by contract for the state of Mississippi.¹⁶

From July 13-15, 1869, a convention of southern delegates assembled at Memphis to discuss the need of labor in this section. Colonel J. W. Clapp addressed the Convention and declared that the project of introducing Chinese labor was not antagonistic to either "white or black labor." He stated that the South was in need of laborers, and that there was no danger here of crowding. In England the proportion of area was six acres to a laborer and in the southern states it was 265 acres to a laborer.¹⁷ Several Chinese business men addressed the convention. Among them, there was Tykem Orr, who declared that 70,000

Chinese laborers had been sent to the West Indies, but that they had not been selected with care and the experiment was not so successful there. He predicted greater success in the South. Koopmanshoop addressed the convention also. He stated that the company with which he was connected had brought 30,000 Chinese to California, and that 60,000 were working in that state as mechanics and railroad workers. They were paid from 90 cents to \$1.50 per day. In the South they would expect to receive only \$20 per month. He added that they were not reliable and that security must be taken from them, for after making a contract they would go off and work for another employer if higher wages were offered them.¹⁸

The committee on Chinese labor reported that this labor should be introduced because the total labor supply was insufficient, and that China was capable of supplying laborers who were particularly adapted to southern conditions. The Christianization of the heathen was again suggested as a subterfuge for securing a labor supply. The Mississippi Immigration Company was organized with a capitalization of \$1,000,000. Forty thousands dollars of this amount were subscribed by the convention. Koopmanshoop was accepted as the coolie contractor.¹⁹

Protests were offered against the introduction of Chinese labor. The Labor Congress at Cincinnati, on August 18, 1870, passed a resolution opposing the importation of Coolie labor,²⁰ and a convention of Negroes, assembled in New Orleans, opposed the introduction of these laborers into the state of Louisiana.²¹ The results show that the projects for the use of foreign immigrants were not generally adopted. For many southern people were willing to give the Negroes the opportunity to work, although it might be under terms most advantageous to themselves. One writer of this group expressed his experience in *The*

Louisville Journal, and it is probable that this was typical. He had tried all kinds of laborers since the war, Irish, Dutch, Canadian, Swedes and Yankees, but said he, "I prefer the Negro to any of them. The Negro is not so quick as many white laborers, but he demands so much less in the way of supplies, is more acclimated and generally easier to get along with." ²²

Thousands of Negroes in the rural sections were dissatisfied with their condition. They left these sections and crowded into the cities where the sudden increase of numbers affected the labor supply, and thus they did not succeed in advancing their economic condition immediately. The urban Negroes, however, seemed to be holding a position in 1870 which was as representative of varied labor interests as in 1850 and 1860. In the District of Columbia, the reports of the relief societies show that for several years a crowded condition prevailed, especially in unskilled labor. A selected list of occupations from among the Negroes of this city in 1870 shows the following results: ²³

Artists	1	Hostlers	60
Assessors	1	Hucksters	30
Bakers	17	Laundresses	35
Barbers	135	Lawyers	1
Bartenders	12	Machinists	2
Blacksmiths	75	Maids	10
Boatmen	5	Mechanics	2
Book Agents	1	Messengers	85
Brickmakers	35	Moulders	1
Butchers	35	Musicians	8
Cabinetmakers	10	Nurses	55
Carpenters	133	Oyster Dealers	35
Cartmen	25	Packers	2
Caulkers	1	Painters	15
Coachmen	25	Photographers	3
Cooks	270	Physicians	8
Coopers	10	Plasterers	35
Clerks	10	Policemen	5
Drivers	110	Porters	220
Dyers	2	Restaurateurs	17
Engineers	10	Sailors	25
Expressmen	2	School Teachers	10
Farmers	15	Seamstresses	80
Feed Dealers	8	Servants	360
Fishermen	15	Sextons	12
Fruit Dealers	3	Shoemakers	115
Grain Dealers	2	Shoe Stores (employees)	2
Grave Diggers	2	Soapmakers	1
Gravel Dealers	5	Soldiers	15
Grocers	20	Students	26
Hairdressers	10	Tailors	20

Tanners	15	Watchmen	8
Teamsters	80	Washerwomen	168
Upholsterers	10	Well Diggers	5
Undertakers	1	Wheelwrights	7
Variety Stores (owners)	2	Whitewashers	50
Waiters	410	Woodsawyers	50

In view of the fact that Washington was not an industrial center, this is a representative list of occupations. However, as in other cities, the bulk of the Negroes were barbers, blacksmiths, carpenters, coachmen, dressmakers, laundresses, messengers, porters, shoemakers and waiters.

In New York City, out of 3,500 voters in 1870, 104 were listed as shoemakers, 100 were engineers, over 80 were carpenters, with other skilled mechanics represented. The Negro skilled workers in some instances were compelled to work at other occupations because conditions were against them. The case is noted of a skilled engraver who was compelled to work as a waiter because the white engravers refused to work with him and therefore no establishment would employ him.²⁴ Another report stated that there were, among the Negroes of this city 50 engineers, 400 waiters, 32 tobacco twistors, 14 masons and bricklayers, 15 smelters and refiners, 2 rollers, 6 moulders, 24 printers and 500 longshoremen.²⁵

The foreign workers made competition keen, especially among the longshoremen and laborers. This racial situation gave rise to cooperative efforts on the part of the Negroes themselves in order to prevent complete exclusions in the trades. At Baltimore they organized a shipyard because they were denied employment in the other shipyards of the city.²⁶ Frederick Douglass stated that prejudice did not descend to such extreme depths "of meanness and cruelty" as among the caulkers of Baltimore. He described the action of the white mechanics who contrived against the Negroes, forcibly driving them from work and threatening them with mob law. But the organization of

the Chesapeake Yard by Negro workers brought about a willingness of the whites to work even on the same vessel with the Negroes.²⁷ At Wilmington, Delaware, there were evidences of thought and progress. Joint-stock companies were organized; large brick buildings and three halls were owned by them.²⁸ An Independent Joint-Stock Company of Washington, D. C., opened a Tobacco and Cigar Manufactory and its advertisement urged the public to patronize it.²⁹ Another establishment was in operation in this city, where patented and useful articles for the household could be secured.³⁰

In Charleston and cities of similar type in the South, the Negroes were among the tailors, the butchers and other tradesmen. A correspondent of *The New York Times* tells of visits to several homes of the Negroes of this city. The homes were furnished with modern improvements, and their tables were spread with the best of foods and the rare wines. In one home he found that the daughters were very musical and that they were studying the most difficult music of Shubert and Bach. While homes of this kind were found in several places, the majority of the Negro group lived almost in poverty. Many of them had small patches of land, but they did not have the knowledge of agriculture necessary to make the land productive.³¹ At Richmond there were prosperous and thrifty owners of homes. Moreover, they were represented in almost every mechanical trade. They were contractors and builders, merchants, and manufacturers; and they were engaged successfully in many other occupations. Among the majority here, there was discovered some destitution because of the reduction in the labor demand on the farms and in the tobacco factories during the harvesting season of 1874.³²

Cities of the North showed the same economic conditions. The Negroes of Albany, New York, were regarded as "industrious and useful citizens." There

were few loafers and vagrants in their number. The property which they owned amounted to over a half million dollars and a large amount of taxes was paid by them. There were tradesmen among them, mechanics, carpenters, masons, tailors, clerks, coopers, barbers. Some of these were particularly respected in this community. Adam Blake, the richest colored man in the city, was said to be worth \$60,000. He began life as a waiter, later he became head-waiter, restaurant-keeper and hotel-keeper. William A. Dietz was said to be worth nearly the same amount. At one time he was the general manager of the Dudley estate, which grew rapidly under his management. Others, with the reputed value of their wealth, were Gideon Leppert, who was a steward for the Schuyler family, \$20,000; B. Barguit, a tailor, \$25,000; Jacob Mason, \$12,000.³³ Throughout the state of Ohio prosperous conditions were also observed among Negroes.³⁴

In the West, in Colorado, there were Negroes who were following the trades which were carried on in this section. There were few farmers owing to the mineral and mining industries. There were no merchants or grocery dealers, but there were carpenters, blacksmiths, miners, plasterers, masons, painters, barbers, stewards, cooks, waiters, teamsters and common laborers. Negro shoemakers, tailors and skilled mechanics were rare. There were about 500 Negroes in the State, among whom there were individuals who were prosperous business men. In Missouri they owned property estimated at \$500,000.³⁵ Henry Clemorgen was a barber who had made over \$40,000 in his business. Another barber, Robert Wilkinson, reported that he had accumulated \$25,000. William Robertson, with his baths and shaving saloons, had acquired property worth \$40,000. Alfred White, a caterer and restaurateur, had wealth to the extent of \$25,000. James Thomas, who was reputed to be

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worth a half million dollars in his own right, had married the heiress to the Rutgers property and added a considerable amount to this fortune.³⁶

Individual wealth in property and income was not confined to any particular section of the country. The South contained a larger number of Negroes than any other section, and, as might be expected, in states of the South, there was a proportionally larger number of wealthy persons. The total possessions in taxable property reported by the Negroes of Georgia amounted to \$6,157,798. It is said that the ownership of this property was equally divided among the race. The richest man in the state was Courtney W. Beall, of Athens, who paid taxes on \$10,805 worth.

The following list of counties shows the property valued over \$100,000 owned by Negroes. The amount of property in several other cities is also given:

COUNTIES		CITIES	
Bibb	\$ 141,681.00		
Chatham	2,081,000.00	Savannah	\$26,200.00
Burk	122,000.00		
Clark	148,000.00	Athens	67,506.00
McIntosh	100,291.00		
Richmond	217,350.00	Augusta	16,100.00
Sumter	101,405.00		
Monroe	113,180.00		
Thomas	125,000.00		
Floyd	117,470.00	Rome	59,555.00
Fulton	281,685.00	Athens	225,000.00

The smallest amount of property owned by Negroes was in Union County. The value of this property was only \$510.

A list of individual Negroes holding property worth over \$5,000 is given which shows how the wealth was divided:³⁷

SAVANNAH		AUGUSTA	
Claudia Gibson	\$6,800.00	B. Butterfield	\$6,500.00
Eliza Towler	5,200.00	D. Gardner	8,300.00
Cecelia Middleton	5,800.00	I. McKinley	6,200.00
		Isabelle Maxwell	5,000.00

MACON

E. Woodliff	\$5,200.00
I. Brooks	5,000.00
B. Henderson	5,000.00
C. W. Craft	5,800.00
L. Henderson	5,200.00

ATLANTA

Dr. R. H. Badger.....	\$5,200.00
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ATHENS

C. W. Beall	\$10,800.00 ³⁹
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It was reported that there were 3,500 Negro seamen who sailed to and from the port of New York, and that their annual wages were \$1,260,000. Some of them were capable not only of serving in subordinate capacities but also of commanding vessels. In the spring of 1868, Captain George Brooks sailed from New York for Europe and Africa, with an entire Negro crew of sailors. They made the journey with satisfaction to the owners. The Negro sailors felt called upon to organize themselves, and so the American Seamen's Protective Union Association was founded. It was incorporated on April 15, 1863.³⁹

Other protective associations were formed in New York. One of the oldest of this group was the New York African Society for Mutual Relief which was founded in 1808 and chartered in 1810. All workmen, skilled and unskilled, were represented: master builders, tailors, shoemakers, machinists, blacksmiths, printers, farmers, notary publics and commissioners, seamen, longshoremen and common laborers. The real estate owned by this organization was valued at \$40,000.⁴⁰ Similar organizations arose in other cities. Their special features were benevolence and protection. They cared for the sick and the infirm, and helped the unemployed to secure employment. These associations taught the lessons of self-help to the masses more clearly than any other agencies.

Individuals were rising to places of prominence and were freeing themselves from economic want, but the group was still in need of direction. The thrifty members of the race were saving money and placing it in the banks or investing it in property.⁴¹ Others were spending their freedom in idleness. Many were known

to work two or three days per week and loaf during the remaining period.⁴² However, President Grant in reviewing the accomplishments of the year in his annual message of 1869, found that the Negroes were making rapid progress, and that there were no complaints on account of "the lack of industry in those places where a fair remuneration for the work done was received."⁴³

The price of labor is an effective aid to its efficiency. Where wages were low, there were many complaints concerning the labor which was performed by the Negro population. At Port Royal, the Sea Islands, and in parts of North Carolina and South Carolina the plantation owners who raised their wages during the spring of 1869 discovered that a larger percentage of their acreage was planted.⁴⁴ In 1869, the wages of the agricultural workers in South Carolina were quoted at \$60.00 per year, and in 1876 the wages were the same.⁴⁵ It was reported that the planters were combining to keep down the wages of the workers. In 1876 some cotton pickers were said to be receiving six, ten and twenty-five cents per day. There should be little amazement that laborers were wanted for cotton picking. At times, even when good wages were offered, workers could not be secured. This was the situation in Mississippi and Tennessee.⁴⁶

In order to remedy these conditions, cooperative enterprises were started by groups of Negro laborers in the South, similar to those among the urban workers noted above. In South Carolina it was reported that groups of Negroes were purchasing plantations through elected officers, that the land was distributed by the officers, and that each member was free to work his plot for himself.⁴⁷ State Fairs were organized for the purpose of encouraging economic progress. The Tennessee Fair was a widely advertised effort. The announcement of its plan was as follows:

\$5,000

Cash Prizes

To be awarded by the Board of Managers
of the

Tennessee Colored Fair.

The Board of Managers of the Tennessee Colored Fair
at Nashville will award
Five Thousand Dollars
in Cash Prizes at the
September Fair

16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 1872

This enterprise is a legal one, authorized by an act of the Legislature of Tennessee and is for the purpose of aiding the developing of the Agricultural and Mechanical interests of the State.⁴⁸

A Colored Labor Convention assembled in Richmond, Virginia, with delegates from several districts in the state. The object of this meeting was to secure for Negro workers better and more uniform pay.⁴⁹ While the national labor organizations had passed into the hands of the politicians, the local Unions were still regarded as effective organizations and their efforts were often successful.⁵⁰

There were Negro newspapers which were interested in labor questions, and their columns were often filled with discussions and advices to laborers. The names of several of these papers which were active in labor discussions were:

The Elevator, San Francisco, California, "edited by a colored man," circulation 2,300.

The Pacific Appeal, published by Negroes.

The New Orleans Tribune—a daily and weekly, each issue 10,000 copies, managed and edited by Negroes.

The South Carolina Leader, circulation nearly 1,000 copies, printed and partly edited by Negroes.

The True Communicator—Baltimore, edited by George T. Cook.

The Zion Standard and Weekly Review—New York City, circulation 4,000 copies. Negroes do all the literary and mechanical work. W. H. Day, Editor.

The Christian Recorder—circulation 2,000 copies, edited and printed by Negroes.

The Freedmen's Torchlight—Published by the African Civilization Society.

The Colored Citizen—Cincinnati, Ohio, circulation 2,400 copies, under entire control of Negroes.

The New National Era, Washington, edited and published by Negroes.⁵¹

Several of these papers were pre-eminently labor organs. In the prospectus of *The Colored Citizen*, published by J. P. Sampson and P. H. Murray, there were these words concerning the mission of the paper: "It shall advocate labor reform, both in the adjustment of the relations between capital and labor, and in that the colored citizen shall have a fair chance in the mechanical industry of the country."⁵² Editorials frequently appeared in *The New National Era* concerning labor. This paper was the organ of the National Labor Union and its special interest was the labor question. According to its point of view, labor was to the nation the foundation of wealth, prosperity and greatness. In one of its editorials it was stated that the first step in the solution of the labor question was the abolition of slavery, but that the question would not be settled until ignorance, passion, ambition, selfishness and demagogism were destroyed. A national committee for the investigation of wages, hours of labor, division of profits, and conditions of labor, was advocated.⁵³ Other editorials on labor included "Industrial Partnership," "True Labor Reform," "The Eight Hour Movement," "Labor in Iron Manufactories," "Labor and Tariff," "Labor Unions and Workingmen." These papers were frequently the teachers of those who were readers, concerning the

measure of usefulness which the Negroes should exert in their communities. They were told that their usefulness depended upon the character of their labor and that the road to comfort was to be found only through constant and patient toil.

Individual Negroes were demonstrating special skill in mechanical pursuits during these years. Jeremiah Baltimore, who was only sixteen years of age, made a model of a steam engine and deposited it in the patent office. The boiler was made of one square sheet of galvanized iron. The cylinder was made of copper and brass, and the steam-chest was brass. This lad had never had any instruction and had gained his knowledge by observation. The engine was regarded as a neat, finished, and perfect product.⁵⁴ Frederick Hackett made a valuable improvement in carpentering, for which he secured a patent.⁵⁵ Joseph Haynes, of Charleston, South Carolina, invented a printing press which would print both sides of a newspaper and produce a perfect paper with one revolution. The machine was self-feeding and could be used for book work. Seventy thousand impressions could be printed per day under the management of one man. This press could be built for \$2,000.00.⁵⁶

The fact that there was mechanical talent among Negroes caused the suggestion to be offered that an exhibit should be made at the World's Industrial Exhibit at Hyde Park, London.⁵⁷ This was proposed so that it would be known that the Negroes were not behind their white compeers in mechanical skill, and that in spite of the barriers which the prejudice of the white laboring classes had interposed in the way of their acquisition of an extended knowledge of industrial pursuits, they had not been behind in the march of progress.⁵⁸

During the autumn of 1864 the proposal was made to a group of persons in New York for the establish-

ment of a savings bank for the freedmen. They were acquiring money and a special depository seemed to be necessary. On April 4, 1865, after the passage of the act of Congress creating the institution known as the Freedmen's Bank, the incorporators met and elected William A. Booth, President, and J. W. Alvord, Corresponding Secretary. Mr. Alvord was to give his attention to the organization of branches in the South.⁵⁹

The first business office of the bank was opened at 87 Cedar Street, New York, and the first branch was established in Norfolk, Virginia, June 3, 1865. The first deposit was made at Washington, D. C., July 11, 1865, and a branch was opened here the next month. In 1867, Washington was made the principal office of the company. And in 1869, property was purchased opposite the Treasury Department and west of Riggs & Company's Bank, fronting 186 feet on Pennsylvania Avenue and 136 feet on Lafayette Square. The purpose was to erect a building which would be occupied as a home office. In several of the branches, Negroes were employed as cashiers, and according to reports they rendered faithful service. Each annual report was an improvement. Evidently the Negroes were working and saving. Lack of business experience, bad management and investment in poor securities caused the failure of the bank. During its existence about \$57,000,000 had been deposited in its vaults by 61,000 depositors.⁶⁰ On June 20, 1874, a congressional act was passed which brought to an end this insolvent institution. The failure of this bank bore great hardship upon the thrifty Negro group. The depositors were mainly laborers, servants, mechanics, farmers; those who could little afford to sustain such a loss. But they quickly recovered, and were again saving and making the required economic adjustment which the period of freedom demanded.

Many of the Negroes went quietly to work during this year in order to make up their losses. But the whites did not always give fair treatment to them. The tenant farmers were often cheated by false accounts. They were made to consent to long contracts at wages which were insufficient for them to live upon. The Credit System gave great opportunity for fraud, and it was through the operation of this system that the dependence of the Negro was increased. A tenant under the credit system received the advance of food, tools and supplies in return for which the proprietor took a lien upon the crop which would be available in harvest time. Stores were established by the proprietors and by the land and money sharks who found the Negroes, ignorant of business, easy prey. Between the storekeeper and the proprietor the Negro had no crop of his own when it was harvested. One of the baneful effects of this system was that it often caused the Negroes to become dishonest and unscrupulous. Convinced that no part of the crop could be his, he either did not put forth effort to complete the crop, or he was dishonest in reporting the amount raised, or he abandoned the crop before harvest time.⁶¹

Such contracts as were made were vaguely written, so that they were not understood and discomfort was produced on both sides. Exorbitant commissions were charged. Floggings were not unknown and intimidation was frequent. The Ku Klux Klan, the White League and similar organizations were proposed to keep "the Negro in his place" politically, and to give as much skilled and unskilled labor as possible to the whites. Hooded and mounted men rode through the country, taking Negroes from their homes at night. An open letter was addressed by Mrs. L. J. Wasson to President Grant reciting the cruelties which were inflicted upon the Negroes.⁶² Rev. Lee in speaking before the Georgia Methodist preachers in March, 1876,

said that the Negroes were practically the serfs of the whites in a large portion of the state of Georgia.⁶³

The election of 1868 and 1872 found the Republican Party in power in the North as well as in the South. The Confederates and their sympathizers took no part in the elections. But methods were used through the Ku Klux Klan conspiracy which threatened to break down the reign of law in the South. The Negroes were the factors in carrying the southern states for the Republicans, although some of them were known to have voted the Democratic ticket. When the elections were ended, the reconstructed governments were controlled by Negro office holders. There were Negro Lieutenant Governors in Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina. The states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina sent representatives to Congress during this period and Mississippi had representation in the Senate. Negroes were in the legislatures of all the southern states, and they occupied many lucrative offices. Some of these men would have been worthy representatives of any group. Others were unlearned and unaccustomed to power or influence.⁶⁴ Conditions in several states were intolerable to the mass of the population, with much taxation, increased state debts, currency depreciation and ill-advised laws. But Negroes were not the only individuals who were guilty of practices which were corrupt and unworthy of representatives of the people. In almost every southern state there were white officers who were unfit for office and who defaulted in their trusts. In many northern cities, following the reorganization which grew out of the Civil War, corrupt political rings were discovered like the Tweed Ring in New York.

This condition in politics was reflected in labor conditions. The South grew restless under Republican and Negro domination and riots occurred.⁶⁵ With the

effort to throw off Negro rule, there was the effort to dominate industry and agriculture as in former years. The immediate withdrawal of the troops by President Hayes brought an end to martial law in the South and abruptly restored to power the element which was most inimical to Negro opportunity and equality.

The unrest among Negro workers had a continuous existence since the Civil War, and during the decade of the seventies it mounted to alarming heights. Outbreaks at this time were prevented as in the days of slavery, that is, by the escape of the boldest to the territory of freedom. They were no longer in search of physical liberty but a larger economic freedom. If they were mistreated as agricultural laborers, they could not turn to skilled labor, even though they were able to perform the tasks which this system required, for there were few factories, or machine shops or foundries in the South, except those which were under construction. The first step was therefore to move into new territory. The suggestion would come to one person that conditions were good in Virginia, another would hear of a paradise of plenty in Kentucky, and yet another would learn of good times in Tennessee or Louisiana. The result was that there was considerable roaming in search of larger economic opportunity.

In 1869 it was reported that the Negroes were leaving Virginia in large numbers for the cotton plantations of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, because better wages were being paid there than in the tobacco area.⁸⁶ Others were moving from the border states into Missouri and the middle West. These early movements were not always concerned with the desire for an escape from bad conditions, but Negro workers were flocking to those places where the best compensation could be secured and where the best advantages for employment were reported.

Advertisements were placed in papers conducted by

Negroes, so that those who were coming into new communities might expect to find work. Such an advertisement was printed in *The New National Era*, March 16, 1871:

Notice

All Colored Helps

Coming to New York City will find
Good situations in the city or vicinity

By calling on or addressing
John W. Jones and A. Mish,
100 West 24th Street, Corner of 6th Avenue,
New York.

The need for distribution of American labor in general was shown in the meeting which organized The National Immigration Bureau in New York on April 11 of this same year. Its purpose was to encourage the distribution of labor through all the states and into the West by settlement. Horace Greeley was elected President.⁶⁷ The eastern centers of population were overstocked with labor, while the new West was raising great demands for it. Laborers were needed in Arkansas and in Kansas and these states were willing to accept Negro workers. In the legislature of the former state, a bill was introduced to secure the appointment of an assistant Commissioner of Immigration, who should encourage Negro labor to enter the state. According to reports there were appeals for laborers from Kansas, also.⁶⁸ Even from far off California, appeals for Negro labor were received.⁶⁹

In spite of these efforts the bulk of Negro migration in the early seventies was toward the South. According to Frederick Douglass the South offered the greatest opportunities, for all the trades were shut against the Negro in the North. In the South, according to Mr. Douglass, the Negroes could be carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, bricklayers, shipwrights, joiners; and in some places teachers, preachers, lawyers, doc-

tors, clerks and hotel-keepers. He found that the South offered a great field in industry; and in politics, also, the Negro had greater power there. As a rule the Negroes remained in the South and their movements were within this section, until conditions forced a change.

By 1872, there were enlarged movements toward the southwest. From the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama they passed. Agents were sent among them, and especially in those places where there were cruelties and oppression there was a ready response. A State Immigration Society was formed by the Negroes of Georgia at the call of J. F. Long. It was proposed to encourage migration to the fertile lands of the West.⁷⁰ The state of affairs became so alarming in Georgia by 1876 that it was reported that 3,000 had emigrated to the southwest from along the railroad which led from Atlanta to West Point, and multitudes were leaving from other points. The flow of population to the West caused some concern to the whites who were considering the means to adopt in order to prevent the loss of labor supply.⁷¹ This movement toward the southwest was very slow and as we observe it we find it confusing. Individuals were the first participants and slowly the group was affected. In this migratory stream which gathered momentum as it passed to the southwest, there were probably 35,000 Negroes between 1875 and 1878, who came largely from South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi to the southwest.

In 1879, a large number of Negroes made a great rush to Kansas. This was the first large group movement away from the South, and the term "Negro Exodus" has been applied to it. Thousands of Negroes laid down the shovel and the hoe and left the sugar and cotton fields of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Georgia for the fertile new lands of Kansas and

the West. The causes for this great movement were the same as those at work in any popular exodus. First, agricultural depression in parts of the South where Negroes owned land; second, bad treatment on the part of landlords and merchants (the stories of the immigrants show that they were the victims of bad contracts, double-dealing, fraud, cunning and even violence); third, the agricultural opportunities which were reported to be offered in Kansas and the West; fourth, the activity of land agents; and fifth, the activity of Negro leaders.⁷²

Because of the treatment which was received by Negroes, there were Negro leaders in the South who actively interested themselves in encouraging the movement. Henry Adams joined with him one hundred and fifty Negroes who found conditions unbearable, and it is reported that together they collected the names of 98,000 Negroes who were willing to move to Kansas. Another man, "Pop" Singleton, with his own money, to the extent of \$600.00, had printed and distributed throughout the southern states circulars entitled, "The advantage of living in a free state." It is estimated that under this inspiration, 25,000 were interested in leaving their homes for Kansas. Actually about one-fourth of the total number became migrants.

Two political leaders in the North were interested in the movement. They took opposite points of view on the question. Frederick Douglass opposed the exodus because, (1) emigration was not the permanent remedy for racial ills, (2) the government should protect all citizens wherever they live, (3) the Negroes should not adopt the nomad life, (4) the failure of African colonization is prophetic of the failure of Kansas emigration, (5) the Negro would lessen his political opportunities, because in the South members of the race could be elected to legislative bodies, (6) in the South the Negro had a monopoly

of labor, and in the West and in the North this could not be secured.⁷³

Richard T. Greener, the first Negro graduate of Harvard College, a Reconstruction office holder in South Carolina and a Professor in the Howard University Law School, opposed the views of Mr. Douglass. He found that (1) the migration was caused by bad treatment and that in the new destination this treatment would cease, (2) the departure would benefit those who remained, for there was too much cheap Negro labor in the South, (3) better wages and living conditions could be secured, (4) political opportunities could be made just as great in the new field.⁷⁴

The migration began with the opening of the spring of 1879 and continued until the end of the summer of that year. The first migrants, however, left their homes when the weather was breaking, but on arriving at their destination found that spring had not come. They were poorly clad and without funds, and consequently many suffered from want and sickness. The bleak prairies of Kansas were not immediately the paradise of plenty which they had expected. Under the direction of Mrs. Comstock, a Quaker, the Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association was organized to assist in relieving the suffering. The distress of the migrants became known in Europe and charitable persons in England sent, at their own cost, clothing, food and other articles. Persons in the United States had just before this time sent relief to Ireland, and this action on the part of England seemed to have savored of a response. A bill was introduced in the House to admit this material free of duty, under Treasury regulations. It was to remain in force until February 1, 1881. The House passed the bill on February 10, 1880, and the Senate on February 27.⁷⁵

The Natchez (Miss.) Daily Democrat urged the Negroes to stay in the South, for this section was not

"disposed either to bulldoze or cheat the colored people."⁷⁶ It was claimed that the Democrats in some places had placed Negroes in the Legislatures, and it was expected that in the future they would be "treated with kindness." Political considerations, it was urged, could be entered among the causes of the migration. The Republican Party was intending to create a new state, thereby making places for colored leaders and securing for itself a doubtful state.⁷⁷ The charge was made also that the Kansas Pacific Railroad Company was anxious to settle the lands which were donated by the Government and that the company was not only encouraging Negroes to come to Kansas, but was arranging passage by steamboat and by rail from the state of Mississippi. The general passenger agent denied by letter that the company was offering any special inducements to Negroes.⁷⁸

The Mississippi Valley Labor Convention met at Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 6, 1879. General N. R. Miles, of Yazoo County, Mississippi, was chosen President, and A. W. Crandall, of Louisiana, Secretary. The committee on address presented a report containing a discussion of the causes for the movement of Negroes. These causes were the low price of cotton, the partial failure of the crop, the system of planting, the system of credit, the fear of Negroes that their civil rights would be removed, and opportunities of plenty in Kansas as reported to the Negroes. The recommendations of the committee included the cessation of the disabilities which were placed upon Negro laborers by the whites. And suggestions were presented that efforts should be made to encourage Negro workers to remain in the South.⁷⁹

Resolutions were offered in both branches of Congress proposing that committees should be appointed to investigate the causes for the movement of the Negroes to the North and the West.⁸⁰ This exodus,

however, was not stopped by governmental intervention or official investigation. The conditions in the several localities to which the migrants were going, and the promise of better conditions at home were the principal causes for the cessation. The first was especially true of Kansas.⁸¹ The colder climate, the necessity of working harder in order to prepare new land for cultivation, the lack of funds and the dearth of industrial opportunities not only caused destitution among those who came, but also put a stop to the alarming overflow from the South. The news soon reached communities in the South that there were migrants who were thronging the wharves along the Mississippi, crowding the steamboats of the river and pressing through the streets of St. Louis and Kansas City in search of work. Churches were opened to them and relief societies ministered to them. Thousands finally reached Kansas and settled in urban and rural sections. They formed colonies at Baxter Springs, Nicodemus, Morton City and Singleton. As a rule, they soon became self-supporting and the cases are rare in which the relief societies were requested to continue their help.⁸²

Many observers were worried by this movement; others looked upon it as a normal, economic process. The spirit of unrest was in the land, and the desire for economic advancement was affecting all groups. *The Junction City Tribune* expressed one point of view when it said, "white folks migrate and black folks migrate, both in the hope of bettering their condition. One is no more mysterious than the other."⁸³ The Senate Investigating Committee found the remedy for the exodus in the hands of the South itself; if it would change its treatment and view the Negroes as men and citizens, the movement would stop and the injury to southern labor interests would cease.⁸⁴

Between 1870 and 1890 the economic life of the

South was transformed. This section was changed in various places from agricultural communities to manufacturing communities. Industrialism succeeded the domestic system—out of the home and the shop into the factory, where the machine and mechanical power were taking the place of human labor. Soon capital began to take advantage of the natural locations in the South and an industrial South began to take the place of an agricultural South. These new conditions made new demands upon the worker. The Negro was familiar with the crude processes of labor, but he was unacquainted with the demands which were made upon labor by machinery and modern industrial development. With the passing of the sentiment in the South that labor for daily wages was unworthy of a gentleman, white workers in large numbers entered the workshops. Since the tradition that white men must not work at the same tasks as black men was prevalent in this section, and since there was an animosity which had been growing between the races, there was sufficient cause for a separation in modern labor.⁸⁵ Work in the factories and in the avenues of skilled labor was for white men, it was assumed, and the bulk of unskilled labor was for Negroes. It is also true that there were few capitalists who were willing to accept Negroes in skilled labor, that there were few white workers who would take Negroes as apprentices, and that there were few white workers who were willing to labor at the same tasks with Negroes. Untrained, discounted in efficiency and proscribed by employers and fellow workmen, the lot of the Negro group was, for a period, to be cast largely with unskilled labor.

In order to aid the Negroes in adjusting themselves more readily to skilled labor conditions, there arose the industrial school. The idea of industrial training for Negroes had appeared in the years prior to the War.⁸⁶

Proposals had been made by private and by public organizations, and small beginnings had been made in the organization of schools. But the first school of any great influence in the industrial field was begun after the War. The majority of the schools which were founded after the war were to give to the freedmen intellectual and moral freedom. These schools were eager to take up the challenge that the Negroes were not the intellectual equals of the whites. They desired to prove that the Negroes could learn everything that other men had learned, and by bringing about an intellectual freedom the emancipation of the group would be complete. Among the number of Reconstruction schools there were several industrial schools, but their development was slow and the support of them was small.

The first instruction in the industrial schools was inadequate for real needs and the results were poor. Some students were able to make repairs on buildings, and to fashion benches, tables and chairs. The girls were taught sewing and home-service. Others were permitted to work their way through schools by performing tasks requiring manual skill. This was the extent of industrial training in a majority of the schools until about 1880. At Hampton, however, the industrial system was receiving its greatest experimentation. Here training in the trades was being taught, and after 1880 this trade-school idea became a part of many school systems.

Hampton Institute was the first Industrial School for Negroes of any considerable influence which was founded after the Civil War. General Samuel Chapman Armstrong was the founder of this Institution in 1868. His idea in founding this school, stated in his own words, was, "To train selected Negro youths who should go out and teach and lead their people, first by example, by getting lands and homes; to give them

not a dollar that they could not earn themselves; to teach respect for labor; to replace stupid drudgery with skilled hands and to these ends build up an industrial system for the sake not only of self-support and intelligent labor but also for the sake of character."

A second influence in the movement for industrial training was the work of Booker Taliaferro Washington who came to Hampton in 1872. He remained at the Institute for three years and was graduated in 1875. After spending a few years teaching, he was called back to Hampton as an instructor; and in 1881 he became the principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute. Under his leadership this school became the great exponent, and Mr. Washington the great advocate, of industrial education for Negroes. In public addresses, which he delivered in all parts of the country, he was seeking to bring about the favorable consideration of this type of educational work, to teach the dignity of labor, and to create a better understanding between the races.

This work was very necessary, for Negroes were excluded from apprenticeship by the rules of the trades unions.⁸⁷ In the South many Negroes who remembered the conditions of slavery were suspicious of apprenticeship and they were unwilling to apprentice their children during the years immediately following the war. Nevertheless, according to General Howard, the schools of the Freedmen's Bureau made arrangements to attach departments for the training of boys in agricultural and mechanical pursuits, and for the training of girls in household duties.

The Sunday Chronicle and *The Harrisburg State Journal* during April, 1873, advised the parents of Negro children to have them trained in the trades. Similar advice was coming from other sources. *The New National Era* replied to these statements, that

this advice was "like telling a man in the water with his hands and legs heavily ironed, to strike out manfully for the shore. Will the proprietors of either of the above journals accept a colored apprentice?"⁸⁸ This was the real difficulty. After securing an adequate training, it was almost impossible to find an employer who would accept a colored workman, and the lack of the capital which was necessary to become a shop-owner in the period after 1880 prevented many Negroes from opening establishments for the employment of their own youth. However the movement for the purpose of training Negro youths for the new industry which was taking hold continued to attract philanthropists and thinking Americans North and South.

One of the agencies in the movement for aiding the Negro population in its adjustment to the new industrial conditions was the John F. Slater Fund. As a result of the gift by Mr. John F. Slater, one million dollars was placed at the disposal of a Board of Trustees, consisting in 1882, of Rutherford B. Hayes, of Ohio; Morrison R. Waite, of the District of Columbia; William E. Dodge, of New York; Phillips Brooks, of Massachusetts; Daniel C. Gilman, of Maryland; John A. Stewart, of New York; Alfred H. Colquitt, of Georgia; Morris K. Jessup, of New York; James P. Boyce, of Kentucky, and William Slater, of Connecticut.⁸⁹

According to the letter to the trustees from the donor, Mr. John F. Slater, the fund was granted for the general object of uplifting "the lately emancipated population of the southern states, and their posterity, by conferring on them the blessings of Christian education." He was "desirous to aid in providing them with the means of such education as shall tend to make them good men and good citizens." Industrial education was not specifically mentioned, although the train-

ing of teachers and the encouragement of institutions which train teachers were given consideration. It was also provided that, if after thirty-three years of existence for the fund, it was apparent to the members of the corporation that there was no further need for the continuance of the fund, it was then to be applied as a foundation attached to institutions of higher education so that their educational opportunities could be made available for poor Negro students.⁹⁰

The plans which were adopted by the trustees proposed to aid, as far as practicable, promising youths who were being "trained in some manual occupation, simultaneously with their mental and moral instruction," and finally, in the proceedings of the Board of Trustees, in 1883, it was agreed that "institutions which give instruction in trades and other occupations, that will enable colored youths to make a living and to become useful citizens, be carefully sought out and preferred in appropriations from this Fund." The list of schools which were aided by the Slater Fund grew in number during the decade, 1880-1890, and the cause of industry among Negroes was given great encouragement. In 1891, Mr. Haywood, the General Agent, in reviewing the work of the previous ten years, reported that the Negro population was in particular need of industrial training and of lessons in thrift and industry. He said, "Everyone known to me earnestly desires to extend its work in this direction. At the beginning, many doubted, some opposed, and not a few were indifferent. At this time, no experienced teacher in Negro schools entertains so much as a doubt as to the desirableness and usefulness of this important element of education."⁹¹

The struggle of the Negro population toward skilled labor was in full swing at the close of the eighties. With the help of sympathetic friends the foundations for economic progress were laid in labor, thrift, in-

dustry and education. In spite of narrow prejudice and selfish greed, succeeding generations of Negro laborers would find themselves occupying larger places and accepting larger opportunities, because of the basis which was laid in this period. The path toward economic freedom was beset with as many obstacles as the path toward political freedom. Each path was revealed as bright and shining at the beginning, but both grew thorny and precipitous as the wayfarers continued their way.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE GROUP MOVEMENT TOWARD SKILLED LABOR

THE movement toward industry in the South was slow and halting in its progress because this section, in the decade 1880-1890, was still agricultural in its thought and its work. The Cotton Exposition at Atlanta in 1881, the New Orleans Exposition of 1884, and the writings and speeches of statesmen and business men had called the attention of the South to new opportunities in industry. In 1880 there were about the same number of cotton mills in the South as in 1860. But the number of spindles had reached nearly six hundred thousand, which was twice the number in 1860. Ten years later, in 1890, there were nearly a million and three-quarters of spindles as compared with six hundred thousand in 1860. In other textile industries, in iron and in manufacturing enterprises, the South was receiving an impetus which was to begin for its people a new economic development.

T. V. Powderly, The Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, described a trip through the Southern States in 1885, during which he noticed little change from earlier periods in the economic life of the South. According to his point of view, the people seemed to be plodding in the same rut in which they had traveled some years ago when he had passed through this territory. On going to Atlanta, four years later, in November, 1889, he noticed a wonderful change in the appearance of this section. On every side of the railroad he saw large factories which had been erected or were in process of construction, and

coming back over another line the same changes were seen.¹ The new industrialism was making itself felt, and it was also changing the ideas of the Southern people concerning labor. With the coming of industry and the factory system, the social code which made manual labor a degrading factor was no longer of binding force. Work in the factories was honorable and it was to be considered as the particular task of the white workers. It is not surprising then, that with exceptions, from the first, the mass of workers in factories and shops were white.²

The great interest of the South was agricultural and it remained the principal interest through many years. The greater portion of the agricultural produce of the South was made by Negro labor, since the majority of the Negroes were laborers upon the land of others. These workers represented the unskilled agricultural group, and the numbers in this group for 1890 and 1900 show a decrease for the latter period. In 1890 there were 1,362,713 agricultural laborers and in 1900 there were 1,344,139. On the other hand, in 1890, the negroes owned 120,738 farms; in 1900 they owned 187,797, and in 1910 the number had advanced to 218,972, an increase of over 82 per cent.

The dependent agricultural workers have labored for the last half century under three methods of labor: the wage-earning system, the share-cropping system and the standing-wage system. Under the wage-earning system, daily wages are paid, usually by the week. Under the share-cropping system, the land was worked on shares. The standing-wage system provided for a period of work before a settlement was made. Rations, seeds and implements were furnished during the period and at the end of the period the hands were paid \$50.00 to \$100.00 per year. The purpose of this system was to hold the laborers on the farm until the crop was harvested. Share-cropping was the most ex-

tensive system, and it has gradually given way to tenancy, which has been increasing since 1900, although not as rapidly as during the last decade of the preceding century. The system is thus described by Chancellor Johnson, of Marlboro County, South Carolina, "I have a good many tenants, white and black. I furnish the stock, food for it, pay one-half the blacksmith, fertilizer, bagging and ties accounts, and furnish ginning facilities; the tenant has his garden and potato patch free, does all the work from repairing fences and ditches to preparing the crop for market, my advances are repaid and the crop is equally divided. The tenants generally get at the rate of eight to ten bales for each mule they work, grain for their family supplies and enough to make their meat. I get the same amount of cotton and more than enough grain for the next year's crop." ³

The wages which were paid Negro farm labor per month in selected states between the years 1898 and 1902 are given in the following table. The amounts were small and show that the lot of the agricultural laborer was not very remunerative, especially in the Southern States. ⁴

States	1898 (Without Board)	1902
New Jersey.....	\$22.30	\$25.89
Pennsylvania	20.59	24.94
Ohio	19.54	22.31
Indiana	19.26	21.17
Kansas	21.03	24.43
Connecticut	27.65	28.59
New York	23.01	26.13
Maryland	16.63	17.29
Virginia	13.18	14.97
North Carolina.....	11.10	12.77
South Carolina.....	9.48	10.79
Georgia	10.36	12.24
Kentucky	15.05	16.19
Tennessee	12.83	13.94

The effect of the agricultural system as operated in the South has been detrimental to the soil. The system was operated largely upon the one-crop plan, year after year without any great improvement in the soil properties. Prior to 1890, there was almost no effort made to educate the Negroes in modern agricultural methods. They had raised the crops of the South for generations before the Civil War with few changes in their methods of production.

About 1890 the influence of schools of agriculture brought on changes which introduced a new stage of agricultural advancement. On February 23, 1892, Booker T. Washington issued the first call for a Conference of Farmers at Tuskegee, Alabama. These Conferences have been held each succeeding year. Addresses have been made, small tracts and circulars have been distributed containing brief lessons on the improvement of agriculture. Among the first of the tracts which were issued, there were two entitled, *Advice to Farmers* and *The Importance of Owning a Home*. The Conferences and publications have been of great benefit in encouraging the creation of better farmers among Negroes. Since 1907 farm demonstration under government supervision has been very helpful also.

Because of the unscientific methods practiced by Negro farm laborers and the seeming dissatisfaction which their work produced, sporadic efforts have been made to introduce foreign workers upon the Southern plantations. Interesting experiments were made with foreign agricultural workers. Italians, Germans, Swedes and other European laborers were employed so that comparisons could be made with Negro laborers and publicity was given to these results.⁵ In many cases which were reported, foreign workers were found to be superior in production. This superiority was attributed to the difference in race. While this

explanation may be satisfying to certain students of the subject, it does not explain the facts.

It is very evident that the Europeans have been trained for centuries as thrifty farm workers. They have been forced to learn and to maintain the best methods in order to make their work profitable. The Negroes have been kept ignorant of better methods of work until very recently, and they have been taught agriculture by a group which was unthrifty, wasteful and indifferent to any manual labor. Therefore, the agricultural processes which were used after the Civil War were still crude and wasteful, and only where there was training in agriculture was there real improvement. The racial difference in agricultural work, as in all of life's paths, is a difference always in favor of those who know and those who do not know. If foreign labor was as effective as some studies indicate, one is led to ask further, why the efforts to import agricultural workers from Europe have not been successful, and why Southern farmers continue to use unprofitable labor with other labor so easily available. In spite of these experiments the Negroes and the native whites have formed, and still form, the bulk of laborers in the South.

The conditions under which the Negro population was compelled to work caused many to leave the South. The figures of residence for the decades, 1890-1920, show that the migration of Negroes was continuous. The number of Negroes who were born in the South and who lived afterward in the North may serve as an index of the amount of the migration.

NUMBER BORN IN THE SOUTH AND LIVING IN THE NORTH AND WEST

Year	Number	Increase
1890	241,855	43,826
1900	349,651	107,796
1910	440,534	90,883
1920	780,794	340,260

The percentage of the number of the Negro population who lived in the North and West increased from 33.8 per cent in 1890 to 42 per cent in 1910 and to 53.2 per cent in 1920. In the year 1910 there were 440,534 Negroes in the North who were born in the Southern States, and there were 41,489 Negroes in the South who were born in the North and West. The net gain for the North was 399,045. On the other hand, only 46,839 Southern whites moved to the North during the decade, 1900-1910. This movement to the North caused some concern on the part of Negro and white leaders. It was feared that the requirements of modern industry would be too great, and the migrants would drift idly into some occupation. Since apprenticeship was unusual and organized labor was indifferent, the result was the restriction of Negro labor to certain types of work.

The questions which were foremost in the first decade of the movement were, where should the Negro cast his lot, North or South, and what should be the type of training which would best prepare him for life? One of the significant milestones in the solution of these questions was the address of Booker T. Washington at the opening of the Atlantic Cotton States and International Exposition on September 18, 1895. Mr. Washington's effort, as he himself explained it, was to cement the friendship between the races, and he endeavored to point out that position which would find ready acceptance at the hands of both races. He urged the Negroes to remain in the South, "to cast down their buckets" where they were, and to attain a high measure of industrial efficiency in the South.

There was a section of his address which occasioned much criticism on the part of the Negro population, and which arrayed two schools in opposition for nearly a decade. Said Mr. Washington, "The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of ques-

tions of social equality is the extremest folly and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle, rather than artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera house." ⁶ Such a statement appeared to the militant members of the race as a complete surrender of their choicest position. The strife grew bitter and the echoes are not yet stilled, but the vast majority of the Negro group now find room for the agitation for rights and privileges and for the economic and industrial preparation which will make one worthy of every responsibility as an American citizen.

While the leaders were discussing policies, the mass was steadily gaining in industrial pursuits. However, to casual observers, it appeared that Negro labor was not maintaining its economic positions. The monopoly which Negroes had in certain fields was being broken during these decades. Three factors contributed to this condition: the inability of the untrained Negro worker to meet the demands of the New Age, the increase of foreign competitors, and the attitude of native American workers. According to the point of view of several persons, the Negro laborer was losing his place.⁷ But this loss is more apparent than real. The Negroes were not only being forced by training, competition and prejudice to give up old tasks but voluntarily they were giving up the old line occupations in order to enter more attractive ones. So far as the Negro population was concerned, the Irish might dig the ditches for the railroads, the Greeks might run

the soup-houses and the bootblack shops, the Italians might conduct the barber shops and do the hotel-work, but the Negroes were resolving that they would leave these menial tasks for those which were more remunerative and more satisfying in their rewards. They were not going to continue as "the hewers of wood and the drawers of water" for white America. Passing through our large cities, observers might notice the changes which seemed to them to predict that Negro labor was on the decline.

On the contrary, the census reports show a continuous diffusion of Negro labor into new avenues, and noticeable increases are reported in the skilled occupations. According to the census of 1890, the number of Negroes who were gainfully employed made up a larger proportion of the Negro population than did the number of the gainfully employed among the native white population. The Negroes at work were 57.67 per cent of the whole number in their group, the native whites were 43.56 per cent, and the foreign whites were 58.10 per cent of the whole number in their respective groups. Nine-tenths of the foreign white males, ten years and over were at work, four-fifths of the Negro males were at work and three-fourths of the native white males.

The Negroes had 36.22 per cent of the females in their group at work, the foreign white females numbered 19.35 per cent and the native white females 13.24 per cent. A larger percentage of Negro women were at work than of white women, and while the percentage of Negro males gainfully employed exceeded the white males, the fact that there were so many female workers helps to explain one of the reasons for the total percentage of the gainfully employed being so far advanced for the Negro population.⁸ The number of Negroes of both sexes who were gainfully employed increased in the decades 1890-1910. Among

the male workers, the percentage increased from 79.4 per cent in 1890 to 84.1 per cent in 1900, and to 87.4 per cent in 1910. Among the female workers, the increase was from 36.2 per cent in 1890 to 40.7 per cent in 1900, and then to 54.7 per cent in 1910.

An analysis of the occupations of Negroes in main occupational groups in 1890, as compared with the native and foreign whites, shows the following results:

Occupation	Negroes	Native Whites	Foreign Whites
Agriculture, Fishing and Mining	1,757,403 or 57%	5,122,613 or 47%	1,305,901 or 26%
Domestic and Personal Service	963,080 or 31%	1,342,028 or 12%	1,375,067 or 27%
Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries ...	172,970 or 6%	2,067,135 or 19%	1,597,118 or 31%
Trade and Transportation	145,717 or 5%	1,722,426 or 16%	712,558 or 14%
Professional Service ...	33,994 or 1%	640,785 or 6%	114,113 or 2%

This table permits the following conclusions: (1) that in 1890 the largest number of Negroes, 88 per cent, were engaged in agriculture and domestic service; (2) that more than one-half were engaged in agriculture, fishing and mining; (3) that nearly one-third were in domestic and personal service, and (4) that a very small proportion was found in trade, transportation and the professions. The larger number of the Negro population in 1890 was composed of farmers and servants. The foreign born whites had twice as many persons in the professions and their largest percentage was in the manufacturing and mechanical industries. A small proportion of the Negro group was engaged in trade and transportation, manufacturing and mechanical industries—for the Negroes, 11 per cent, for the native whites, 35 per cent, and for the foreign-born whites, 45 per cent. It is conclusive that the labor of Negroes was reversed in kind to the whites, but the types of Negro occupations manifested much improvement over previous years.

A selected list of Negro male skilled workers in the order of their numerical importance in 1890 is given in the following:

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Carpenters	22,318	Mill and Factory Operatives	5,050
Barbers	17,480	Painters	4,396
Saw Mill Operators.....	17,230	Plasterers	4,006
Miners	15,809	Quarrymen	3,198
Tobacco Factory Employees.	15,004	Coopers	2,648
Blacksmiths	10,762	Butchers	2,510
Brickmakers	10,521	Woodworkers	1,375
Masons	9,647	Tailors	1,280
Engineers and Firemen.....	7,662	Stone Cutters	1,279
Iron and Steel Workers....	5,790	Leather Curriers	1,099
Shoemakers	5,065		

Although only thirty years removed from slavery, the Negro skilled workers were rapidly gaining literacy as well as increasing in types of occupations. As would be expected, the machinists, printers, tailors, and dress-makers were the literate, and the illiterate were among the unskilled and rough workers.

MALES	Percentage Illiterate	FEMALES	Percentage Illiterate
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights	53.	Dressmakers, Milliners, Seam-	
Boot and Shoemakers.....	37.5	stresses	21.4
Butchers	40.7	Tobacco and Cigar Factory	
Carpenters	43.8	Operatives	57.3
Cotton Mill Operatives.....	45.	Tailoresses	22.6
Machinists	25.4		
Masons	38.6		
Miners and Quarrymen.....	49.8		
Printers	10.7		
Steam Railroad Employees....	55.6		
Tailors	15.2		
Textile Mill Operatives.....	51.3		
Tobacco and Cigar Factory			
Operatives	40.		

In the days prior to the Civil War, illiteracy did not play so large a part in the efficiency of the workers. Negroes, as untaught slaves, were good carpenters, blacksmiths, machinists and mechanics of all kinds. Many were excellent workmen, but they were often unable to plan their work on paper. The new industrial era demanded another type of workman, and the workmen who were unable to stand the test were passed by. The experience of some white masters with their slave workmen and the acquaintance of others with slaves led them to advocate the training and use of Negroes in skilled labor. Others opposed the use of Negroes in this employment. According to

their argument, Negroes should be used for unskilled and gang labor; skilled labor and factory labor especially, were for white workmen.⁹

Aside from the skill which the post-war period increasingly demanded, one may also note the attitude of many unsympathetic whites. They would permit the Negro to shoe a horse, drive a garbage wagon, a coal cart, a grocery wagon, or build a shanty, or become a day laborer, but he was not permitted to enter the skilled trades either as an apprentice or a worker.¹⁰ The white worker could go through some kind of apprenticeship but the Negro must go from common labor to skilled labor, if this was permitted. It mattered not how unprejudiced the employer might be, his employees would refuse to work with Negroes on the same job, and hence he must refuse Negroes the opportunity to enter skilled labor. Since there were not enough Negroes to fill all the places which were made vacant by the dissatisfied white workers, the employer had no choice. This was the situation in the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill Company in 1896, when the attempt was made to introduce Negro workers at the same loom with the whites, who thereupon refused to work, and the effort to introduce Negroes was withdrawn.¹¹ In March of the same year, a similar situation was noticed on the Philadelphia and West Chester Trolley Line. The Company controlling this road employed two Negroes. The whites protested and quit their work. President Shiner readily yielded to the protest and ordered the dismissal of the Negro workmen.¹² A witness, who was a machinist, appeared before the Industrial Commission on Capital and Labor, and he was asked, "Are there any colored men in your shop?" The answer was, "No, sir, I never worked in a shop with a Negro as a machinist." The questioner then asked, "Would you?" and the answer was, "No, sir, I would not."¹³ This frank statement ex-

pressed the attitude of the average Southern white skilled laborer, and of some Northern skilled laborers.

This sentiment in some cases has led to strikes by white laborers on account of the presence of Negroes in the industries in which they labored. Between 1882 and 1900, there were 50 strikes against Negro labor, listed by the Department of Labor, of which 11 were successful and 39 failed. Twenty-three were against the employment of Negro male workers, sixteen were to secure the discharge of Negro workers, seven were opposed to working with Negroes, one was against the employment of a Negro foreman, one was against a Negro head-waiter, one was against Negro girls, and one against Negroes being allowed to do journeymen's work.

The causes of the strikes as they occurred by years between 1882 and 1900 are listed as follows:¹⁴

SUMMARY OF CAUSES OF STRIKES AGAINST NEGRO LABOR, BY YEARS. 1882-1900

Year	Cause or Object	Number of		
		Strikes	Succeeded	Failed
1882.	Against Employment of Negro Men.....	2	0	2
1883.	Against Employment of Negro Men.....	2	1	1
1885.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	1	1	0
1885.	Against Employment of Negro Men.....	1	0	1
1887.	Against Working with Negro Men.....	1	0	1
1887.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	1	1	0
1888.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	6	0	6
1889.	Against Employment of Negro Men and for Increase of Wages	1	0	1
1889.	Against Working Under Negro Foreman....	1	1	0
1889.	Against Working with Negro Men.....	2	0	2
1889.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	1	0	1
1890.	Against Working with Negro Men.....	1	0	1
1891.	Against Working with Negro Men.....	1	0	1
1892.	Against Working with Negro Men.....	1	0	1
1894.	Against Employment of Negro Men.....	12	0	12
1894.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	2	1	1
1896.	For Discharge of Foreman and Against Negro Employees doing Journeymen's Work.....	1	0	1
1897.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	1	1	0
1898.	Against Employment of Negro Men.....	1	1	0
1899.	Against Obnoxious Rules and for Discharge of Negro head-waiter	1	0	1
1899.	For Discharge of Negro Employees.....	4	1	3
1900.	Against Employment of Negro Girls.....	1	0	1
1900.	Against Employment of Negro Men.....	5	3	2
Total		50	11	39

In spite of these strikes, of which more than three-fourths were failures, the movement toward skilled labor was maintained with increasing power. The labor which was performed by individual skilled workers had come to the attention of employers and the question was raised as to the employment of Negroes in large-scale industry. In the South, the principal new manufacture was cotton. Could Negro workers be used in the cotton mills? The racial attitude of the white workers and the lack of modern training and industrial contacts were certain to prove serious obstacles in the path of Negro skilled labor.

In the decade, 1880-1890, there was much discussion concerning the employment of Negroes in the cotton mills and in the following decade, 1890-1900, their employment in other manufacturing plants was also under consideration. A report was made of a survey of the cotton mills of South Carolina in 1880 which mentions the employment of Negroes at infrequent intervals.¹⁵ It was estimated that a factory with Negro labor could be operated 40 per cent cheaper than a factory with white labor.¹⁶ There were two main objections to the employment of Negroes, one was that the white and Negro operatives could not be worked together,¹⁷ and the other was that the Negro would not be able to stand the monotony of the mill, and that "in the warm rooms of a mill doing light work, he was apt to fall asleep."¹⁸

The prevalence of this opinion may be seen by several quotations from recent economic studies. In the Harvard Economic Studies, Volume VIII (pp. 47-48), *The Cotton Manufacturing Industry of the United States*, by M. T. Copeland, there is this sentence, "The average Negro is not temperamentally adapted to monotonous, mechanical work." Another study, *Cotton Spinning and Manufacturing in the United States of America*, in the Publications of the

University of Manchester, Economic Series, No. 11 (p. 45), contains the statement that "the Negro intellect is dulled by the noise and monotony of work on mill machinery." Broadus Mitchell in *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South*, a study made under the direction of Johns Hopkins University (pp. 218-221) quotes from personal interviews with men who had lived through labor experiences with Negroes in Cotton Mills, and who years afterwards call upon the past to give testimony for the present. The recollections of these men seem to convince them that the Negro's moral and temperamental qualities are against him as a skilled laborer.

Such dogmatic generalizations are not only unscholarly but untrue. There are no facts, except personal opinions, to support such statements, and any thoughtful person who has had wide experience with Negro workers and white workers knows that their efficiency varies as individuals and not as races. There are exceptional workmen in each group, and the attempt to place all of one group together for purposes of generalization has resulted in false conclusions. Similar generalizations on matters of race have become fixed traditions in our present racial situation, and expressions based upon such traditions frequently pass as current facts because they are unchallenged. Some observers realized that the determining conditions were largely environmental as when one, after noting the degraded condition of certain persons of the Negro group, added that "all of the above remarks will apply with but few variations to the condition of the sand-hill whites, most of whom are inveterate beggars."¹⁹

Others have asserted that the Negro cannot be controlled, that he will work until he has obtained a little money and then go off to spend it; that when a circus or a revival comes to town, there is also a ces-

sation from labor.²⁰ But this difficulty is not only common with Negro labor, it is true also of white labor. In 1885, at the Sloss Furnace Company, in Birmingham, Alabama, 569 white men were employed to do the work of 269 regular workers.²¹ According to an investigation of cotton mills in South Carolina, made about 1906, it was observed that 75 per cent of the mill operatives were regular and the remaining 25 per cent were more or less regular. One mill was doing well when it had one-third of its force of 2,500 at work. One of the best superintendents in the state observed that it was necessary to carry from 20 to 25 per cent of spare help in order that the work might go forward. Another observed that the South Carolina operatives were satisfied to work on the average of five out of seven days.²² The dislike of work cannot be racial, although by reason of climate and economic tradition the entire group who are living in a section may be affected, and then only certain individuals among the group show the same tendencies. Where the Negroes are shut off from the amusements and the recreations which every normal person desires and which modern social workers are finding necessary for industrial workers, it is not surprising to find that the circus, the revival, the funeral, and large religious gatherings will take numbers from work.

Add to this the facts that as a result of slave conditions many are still primitive in their thought-life and dependent upon others for direction, and that there is a greater difficulty for Negroes in rising from manual labor to more skilled and higher paid positions, there then may be seen the basic reasons for that which is called "a racial characteristic." It would follow that were the conditions changed and the environment made different, the so-called "racial traits" would disappear. This is being proved almost daily by the migration into the North and the West, where

opportunity and intelligence are permitting greater advances in the labor world. When one considers the economic conditions and the social environment of the past and the present, it is unjust to condemn the Negro laborer as racially unworthy and temperamentally unfit for skilled labor as well as unreliable for all types of labor.

In the Saluda factory, which, with slight interruptions, had had a long history, 100 operatives were employed, 25 of whom were Negroes. The superintendent, Mr. Campbell, said that Negroes were as capable of instruction as the whites, and that their work was cheaper in cost. Moreover, he had worked mixed operatives to the advantage of the mill.²³ Other mills in South Carolina were using Negro workers²⁴ at Graniteville, Lancaster, Pacolet and Chiquola. In the nineties, an attempt was made at Charleston to use Negro labor in the mill of the Charleston Manufacturing Company. White labor had been used in the operation of the mill and it had failed. The employment of Negro labor met with the same results. The failure of the mill was attributed by the manager to its location.²⁵

Another experiment in the employment of Negro labor in the southern cotton industry was made at the Coleman cotton mill at Concord, North Carolina. This mill was owned and operated by Negroes. The leading spirit in the enterprise was Warren Coleman, a wealthy Negro property owner. By mass meetings, and through the Negro newspapers, subscriptions to stock were secured. The capitalization was \$100,000. The organization was begun in 1897, with Mr. Coleman as Secretary-Treasurer and with Mr. A. G. Smith, of Easthampton, Massachusetts, as Superintendent. Mr. Smith was the only white person connected with the mill, and the operatives were inexperienced and had to be trained for their tasks.

The plant comprised 100 acres of land upon which there was a three-story brick building. There were two boilers of 100 horsepower each, and the modern equipment of looms, spindles and other necessary machinery. Several tenement cottages were erected and rented to the employees. It was said that they were paid about one-half as much as the same workers in Massachusetts. The directors of the mill included John C. Dancy, ex-Collector of Customs at Wilmington, and Registrar of Deeds of the District of Columbia; S. B. Pride, Professor at Biddle University; E. A. Johnson, Dean of the Law Department of Shaw University.

The mill was started in July, 1901, and appeared to be operating successfully from the reports of the Superintendent. But a visit to the mill in 1902 found it closed. In 1904, Mr. Coleman died and it was found that he had been sacrificing his private wealth in order to keep the mill in operation and that the mill was indebted to him to the extent of \$12,000. The opinion of Mr. White who had charge during the last few months, and the opinions of persons in the mill organization and the community, are that the labor was satisfactory, and no fault could be found with it, but that there was inefficient management and a lack of working capital. These causes were fundamental ones in the failure of many Negro business enterprises.²⁶ At Anniston, Alabama, a company was organized to build and operate a cotton mill, which was known as The Afro-American Cotton Mill Company. Its failure followed soon after, for the same reasons; the lack of a knowledge of operation, and the lack of money.²⁷ But the labor was reported as regular, efficient, and cheaper, in that savings were effected in operation.

In the manufacture of iron, Negro labor was employed as it had been employed prior to the Civil War.

At the Shelby Iron Works in Shelby County, Alabama, the bulk of the labor had been carried on by Negroes since the organization of the work in 1862. Their labor was "orderly and regular." The manager reported that he would not exchange Negro workers "for any other people on earth." He believed that they were the best labor to be found.²⁸ At Tecumseh, good Negro iron workers were employed. The iron works in the state of Tennessee employed many Negro workers. The majority of them found employment in the heavy unskilled work. The Roane Iron Company, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, had employed Negroes in "isolated mechanical positions" with good results. It was reported that dependence could not be placed upon white labor during the summer months, especially about the blast furnaces.²⁹

In Tennessee, it was said that prejudice against Negroes was greatest in the iron industries. Efforts had been made to use Negroes in the puddling, heating and rolling of iron, but there were threats of strikes.³⁰ At first, at Chattanooga and Knoxville, Negroes were put into semi-skilled positions and gradually worked into higher positions. In 1883 there was a strike, and the companies decided to put the Negro workers into every phase of the iron industry. A few whites who were skilled agreed to work with them so that training could be given to them. Their work was found to be "fully as good as white men; their yield is as good, they are as steady workmen; they are as reliable in every way and their product is fully as good as anything that we have got yet from white labor." And it was reported that "we have never had more successful working of the mill than during the last two years when we have had colored labor almost exclusively."³¹

The same results were reported by the Midvale Steel Company, of Philadelphia, in 1900. The labor

of Negroes was regarded as excellent. Many of them came to the work ignorant and untutored, and they had to be trained, but they gradually became skilled and some of them were advanced to positions of foremen. The wages which were paid to them were the same as the wages to the white laborers.³²

The employment of Negro labor in industry occasioned so much discussion that an investigation was conducted by *The Tradesman* of Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1889, 1891 and again in 1902. In 1889, the question was discussed generally and in 1891 a more complete study was made. The following circular of questions was sent to every important manufacturing company in the South:

1. How many Negro laborers do you employ?
2. How many are skilled and how many common laborers?
3. Wages paid common and skilled laborers?
4. What degree of efficiency do you find in common and skilled Negro laborers as compared with white labor in like work?
5. Do you intend to continue the employment of Negro labor?
6. Are your Negro laborers improving in efficiency?
7. What effect has such education as the younger generation has acquired had on them as laborers?
8. Does it add or detract from a Negro's efficiency as a laborer, in your opinion, to educate him?

Your answer will be treated as strictly confidential, the facts being used impersonally and discussed generally, together with a large mass of similar answers from Southern manufacturers.

Yours,

Tradesman Publishing Company,
George W. Ochs, Manager.³³

Replies were received from 196 persons who were residing in all the Southern States. These employers

had in their employ 7,395 Negro workers, of whom 978 or about 12 per cent were skilled and about 2,000 were unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. The average wage was \$1.75 per day, although in the iron industry the heaters and puddlers received from \$4.00 to \$5.00 per day. The trend of the replies expressed satisfaction with Negro labor and a practically "unanimous decision" was made to continue the employment of Negroes and to advance them to more skilled positions. Sixty-seven employers working 2,413 laborers reported that there had been an increase in efficiency. Forty-three employers working 2,279 laborers reported that there had been no improvement and fifteen employers working 1,369 were in doubt concerning an increase in efficiency.³⁴

In 1893, a second investigation of Negro labor was made by *The Manufacturer's Record* of Baltimore. The views of the majority of the manufacturers were that in its condition Negro labor was unfitted for employment in manufacturing. But it was added that with training, Negro labor could be used. Mention was made especially of the cotton mill which was not the natural field of labor for the Negro, nor, concludes the report, "was the primitive white man fitted for skilled labor; but it seems to be conceded by competent judges that training and discipline are all that is required to make good mill hands out of colored folk."³⁵

The Tradesman, of Chattanooga, in 1902 extended its scope of inquiry, with the cooperation of Dr. W. E. B. Dubois of Atlanta University, so that replies were received from about 500 leading manufacturers of the South. Of this number 344 concerns regularly employed Negro labor as well as white labor. The total number of employees was 36,404, and of this number 16,498 were Negroes. Two hundred and nine of these manufacturers, who employed 27,000 persons in all,

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employed in this number 12,840 Negroes, of whom 2,650 or about 20 per cent were skilled or semi-skilled. The report concluded that "unquestionably there has been some advancement" among Negroes in skilled labor pursuits.

The industries in which they were employed were:

- 72 Cotton seed oil mills.
- 61 Saw, planing or shingle mills and furniture factories.
- 25 Foundry and machine shops, boiler works and machinery manufactories.
- 12 Manufactories of wagons, buggies, etc.
- 10 Concerns manufacturing brick, sewer pipe, tiling, etc.
- 10 Box-sash, door, blind, stave or barrel factories.
- 6 Rolling mills and blast furnaces.
- 3 Ginneries.
- 2 Plow factories.
- 2 Stove and hollow-ware plants.
- 2 Ship-building plants, and one each of oil and gasoline plants, sugar factory, cotton-gin machinery plants and cast iron pipe manufactory.

In the heavy work of these plants, Negroes were found to be superior to other laborers, but they were not in the skilled factory work. It was reported that they could become good masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, firemen and engineers, but the number who could do fine cabinet work, watch-making, tool and machine construction was small.

The wages which were paid to Negroes in skilled labor showed an improvement for the period 1891-1902. The average wage of skilled labor in 1891 was \$1.75 per day, and in 1902 the average wage was \$2.00 per day. Unskilled labor, on the other hand, received \$1.10 per day in 1891 and \$1.00 per day in 1902. This was a decrease which, it was said, was occasioned by an increase in the supply of unskilled

labor through the willingness of both races to engage in this type of work. The investigation stated that this increase of unskilled labor was due to the fact that "Many of the poorer classes of whites are now seeking work, who formerly loafed and hunted."

Concerning the education of these Negro laborers, 40 per cent could read and write and they knew something of arithmetic, history and geography. The remaining 60 per cent were practically uneducated. Sixty-seven employers who employed 6,855 persons stated that the effect of education was to lower the efficiency of the Negro laborer. Forty-seven employers working 10,090 laborers, the larger number, stated that the effects of education were to improve the efficiency of Negro labor. Ninety-five employers working 10,055 persons either failed to answer or their answers were indefinite. General satisfaction was expressed with Negro labor by the manufacturers. Nearly all of them reported that they would continue the employment of Negroes, and a majority reported that they wanted "all the Negro skilled labor" that they could get.³⁶

In the same year, an investigation of skilled labor among Negroes was undertaken by Atlanta University, under the direction of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois. Atlanta University had been publishing a series of studies of Negro life since 1898. Through the efforts of Mr. George Bradford, of Boston, Massachusetts, a Trustee of Atlanta University, and with the interest of Professor Edward Channing, of Harvard University, and interested philanthropists, the first study of Negro Mortality was published. In 1902 the results of a conference at Atlanta led to the publication of *The Negro Artisan*, The Atlanta University Publications No. 7. This study embraced a survey of the Census reports, Negro Industrial Schools, and the re-

ports from personal observations by investigators in local communities. No effort was made to codify or analyze the results of the personal observations, but they were printed as they were given. Again in 1912, an effort was made to bring out a second study of this problem. This study was larger than the first and the attempt was made to give a contemporary view of labor conditions with a brief historical survey.³⁷

An investigation was made in 1908 of Negro laborers in the Central Appalachian Coal Field by Dr. G. T. Surface, of the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University. It was reported that the Negro miners compared favorably in physical strength with other groups, but that their skill was lower as a group. However, the maximum-producing Negroes were equal to those of other races. The Negroes were found to spend 90 per cent of their earnings and they worked more irregularly than foreign laborers.³⁸

These studies were efforts to give information regarding the employment of Negro labor especially in industry. Some of the answers, as well as the investigations, it may be assumed with good reason, were colored by prejudice in favor of one or the other races as laborers. Other employers presumed that the Negro could not do skilled labor, and so there was rarely a practical test of his ability to do such work. The Negroes who were in skilled labor were quietly at work. The average reader and observer, therefore, reads, hears, or sees little of the Negroes who occupy superior positions in the economic spheres of Negro life.

The five main occupations of Negroes, as compared with native and foreign whites in 1900, are given in the following table. A glance will show an improvement over the previous decade, but it is still very evident that there is a large proportion of the Negro population in agriculture and domestic service.

NEGRO OCCUPATIONS IN 1900, COMPARED WITH NATIVE WHITE AND FOREIGN WHITE OCCUPATIONS

Occupations	Negroes	Native Whites	Foreign Whites
Agricultural Pursuits.	2,143,176 or 53.7%	6,004,039 or 43.3%	1,074,211 or 18.7%
Professional Service..	41,524 or 1.2%	806,288 or 5.8%	143,896 or 2.5%
Domestic and Personal Service	1,324,160 or 33.0%	1,841,853 or 13.3%	1,435,407 or 25.0%
Trade and Transportation	209,154 or 5.2%	2,400,018 or 17.3%	915,151 or 16.0%
Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits	275,149 or 6.9%	2,823,131 or 20.3%	2,168,153 or 37.8%

The proportions show that in 1900 the Negro population again had its greatest relative occupational importance in agricultural pursuits, and in domestic and personal service. The native whites at this time also had their greatest relative occupational importance in agriculture and in manufacturing, and mechanical pursuits; and the foreign whites, as before, had their greatest relative occupational importance in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, and in domestic and personal service. Moreover, the proportion of females was again much higher among Negroes than among the white population; 40.7 per cent of the Negro females were gainfully employed and 16 per cent of all the white females.

The percentage of the Negro population of the total population in the five main occupational groups for 1890, 1900 and 1910 show marked improvements on the side of skilled labor. From these figures alone it is evident that there was a movement of the group toward mechanical pursuits.

Occupations	1890	1900	1910
Agricultural Pursuits	21.7	20.6	23.1
Professional Service	3.6	3.7	3.8
Domestic and Personal Service.....	22.6	23.6	20.5
Trade and Transportation.....	4.3	4.4	5.5
Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits.....	3.6	3.9	6.5

As factory workers the Negroes were making great increases. In 1900 the number was 131,216, and in 1910 the number of Negro factory workers had in-

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creased to 358,180 which was an increase of 173 per cent. The Textile Industries employed 2,949 in 1900, and ten years later the number had increased to 11,333, which was an increase of 283 per cent. These workers in both factory and textile industries were distributed in 1910 as follows:

Chemical and Allied Industries.....	10,870
Clay, Glass and Stone Industries.....	28,519
Clothing Industries	11,692
Food and Kindred Industries	17,894
Iron and Steel Industries	41,739
Leather Industries	5,845
Liquor and Beverage Industries	8,508
Lumber and Furniture Industries	126,018
Metal Industries, except Iron and Steel	2,861
Masons (Brick and Stone)	12,401
Iron and Steel Workers	11,599
Machinists and Millwrights.....	3,296
Boiler-Makers	475
Shoe Factory Workers	2,967
Wood-Working Employees	4,705
Shoemakers, not in Factories	3,695
Leather Belt, Case and Pocketbook Factories.....	97
Jewelers, Watchmakers, Goldsmiths and Silversmiths.....	157
Other Metal Industries	300
Saw and Planing Mill Employees	91,887
Woolen Mills	343
Silk Mills	560
Dyeing, Finishing, and Printing Mills.....	645
Knitting Mills	816
Cotton Mills	7,216
Paper and Pulp Industries	1,455
Printing and Bookbinding	4,058
Blacksmiths	9,727
Potters	477
Bookbinders	278
Coopers	2,305
Brassworkers	361
Gold and Silver Factory Workers.....	84
Tinsmiths and Coppermiths	884
Harness and Saddle Factories	421
Tanneries	2,272
Trunk Factories	88
Cabinetmakers	293

Enterprising individuals in the Negro population were developing small business undertakings during this period. Restaurants, barber-shops, grocery-stores, dry-goods stores, and general merchandise stores represented the larger number of Negro store proprietors. They were in the main small businesses controlled by individual proprietors. Undertakers, real-estate dealers and contractors began to appear, and organized groups such as The Mount Alto Mining and Land

Company of Virginia, which was incorporated and began business in 1880.

Elijah McCoy began a series of inventions in 1872, including a lubricating cup now in general use. Granville T. Woods developed over fifty improvements in electrical appliances. Jan. E. Matzelinger invented a machine for making shoes. It was purchased by the United Shoe Machine Company.³⁹

The professions among Negroes as shown by the reports of 1910 were greatly undermanned. The average population per Negro professional person was 146, and the average population per white professional person was 51. There were more clergymen among Negroes than among whites. There was one clergyman for every 562 Negroes, and one for every 815 white persons. This was the only profession in which the Negro professional persons were relatively more numerous than the whites. The physicians and surgeons were one for every 3,194 Negroes and one for every 553 whites. The dentists were one for every 20,560 Negroes and one for every 2,070 whites. The college presidents or professors were one for every 40,611 Negroes and one for every 5,301 whites. The school teachers were one for every 334 Negroes and one for every 145 whites. The relative number in professional service among the Negro population was less than the number among the white population. Negro professional service had increased but the Negro population was not as adequately represented in the professions as other American groups.

The increases in the five occupational groups in 1910 over 1900 show the advance in skilled labor pursuits. All occupations show advances but the greatest advances are noted in skilled labor. Agricultural pursuits increased 35 per cent, Professional Service increased 47 per cent, Domestic and Personal Service increased 17 per cent, Trade and Transportation in-

creased 103 per cent, and Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits increased 156 per cent.

Greater effort had been made to advance in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits and in trade and transportation. Nevertheless, proportionately too large a number of the Negro population has been composed of "farmers" and "servants," although the proportion employed has been smaller in each decade and the increases in technical pursuits have been marked. The growth of numbers employed in occupations other than Agriculture, Personal and Domestic Service is prophetic of a probable widening of the fields of employment open to Negroes. The movement of the group toward skilled labor pursuits had begun by 1900. In spite of numerous obstacles, the close of the decade, 1900-1910, witnessed the beginning of the expansion of Negro labor into the industries which have brought on the age of iron, steam, and electric power.

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13. Ibid., p. 574; Senate Committee on Education and Labor (1885), p. 170.
14. Sixteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, Strikes and Lockouts, pp. 413-465, U. S. Bureau of Labor, Washington, 1901. A study of the causes of strikes for the later period is impossible because the strikes are not listed in subsequent labor reports as against Negroes per se, but "against certain persons." See Twenty-first Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1906, Strikes and Lockouts.
15. Mitchell, Rise of Cotton Mills in the South, p. 220.
16. The Cotton Mills of South Carolina, their Names, Location, Capacity and History, Department of Agriculture of South Carolina, Charleston, 1880, pp. 5-6.
17. Ibid.
18. Mitchell, Rise of Cotton Mills, p. 220. Cotton Mills of South Carolina (1880), p. 11.
19. The Atlantic Monthly, Vol. XXXIX, p. 679.
20. Report of the Investigating Committee of the Senate on Education and Labor (1885), Vol. IV, pp. 48-49, 408. Thompson, From Cotton Field to Cotton Mill, pp. 263-267.
21. Report of Investigating Committee of the Senate, 1885, Vol. IV, p. 286.
22. Kohn, The Cotton Mills of South Carolina, p. 62. Thompson, From Cotton Field to Cotton Mill, pp. 263-267.
23. Cotton Mills in South Carolina (1880), p. 9.
24. Report of the Industrial Commission, Vol. VII, p. 63. Kohn, The Cotton Mills of South Carolina, pp. 24-25.
25. Thompson, From Cotton Field to Cotton Mill, pp. 248-264. Mitchell, Rise of Cotton Mills, pp. 215-218.
26. Gunton's Magazine, Vol. XXIII, pp. 254-256. Thompson, From Cotton Field to Cotton Mill, pp. 253-264.
27. The Manufacturer's Record, October 13, 1893, p. 179.
28. Report of the Investigating Committee of the Senate on Education and Labor, Vol. IV, pp. 158-162.
29. Ibid., pp. 130-133.
30. Ibid., p. 170.
31. Report of the Investigating Committee of the Senate on Education and Labor, Vol. IV, pp. 133-134.
32. Report of the Industrial Commission, Vol. XVII, p. 353.
33. The Tradesman, August 1, 1891.
34. The Tradesman, August 15, 1891, pp. 31, 32, 44.
35. The Manufacturer's Record, September 22, 1893, pp. 130, 134, 135.
36. The Tradesman, October 15, 1902, pp. 52, 26, 72-73.
37. See Atlanta University Publications, No. 7 and No. 17.
38. Annals of the American Academy of Political Science, Vol XXXIII, pp. 114-128.
39. For a fairly complete study of inventions see H. Baker, The Colored Inventor.

CHAPTER IX

ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE NEGRO

THE American Labor Movement of earlier years had failed to secure any large success for the laboring groups. There were two consequences of this failure. One was renewed interest in the Knights of Labor, an organization which survived the disruptive tendencies of the labor movement after the Civil War, and the other was a new organization, the American Federation of Labor. The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor was organized in 1869, and its first large National Convention was held in 1876. It was supposed, according to its constitution, to make no distinction of race. It was organized to uphold the dignity of labor and to affirm the nobility of all who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow.¹ Mr. Powderly, one of its most influential leaders, declared that its purpose was to banish "that curse of modern civilization—wage slavery."²

The Negroes were to be organized with the encouragement of the National Organization. By 1885, it was reported that the Negroes were enthusiastically joining the organization, especially in Virginia, where there were seven assemblies in the city of Richmond, and a very large one in Manchester.³ Because of the lack of discrimination, the Negroes joined the order in many other places. The decline of the organization was as rapid as its rise. After 1886, two factions appeared. One expected to secure labor reform through political action and the other planned to at-

tain it by direct methods. The Knights of Labor exerted much influence on the treatment and organizations of Negro workers. Their declarations rang true, and their associations and practice of brotherhood had its effects upon local organizations, some of which were not affiliated with it.

At New Orleans in 1883, the Central Trades and Labor Assembly, which was made up of the labor organizations of the city, was making efforts to organize the Negro workers. Parades were held in 1883, 1884 and 1885 in which Negroes took part. It was declared that this action on the part of the assembly did much in breaking up the antagonism between white workers and Negro workers, and that conditions were as fraternal there as in any part of the country. In 1886, the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners reported that there were 14 unions of Negro carpenters affiliated with them in the South, and that they attended the conventions of the Brotherhood.⁴ In this year it was stated that the "color line" in labor had been broken and all were working in a common cause.⁵

This statement was not true in all details, for at Richmond in this year an incident occurred which revealed an opposite sentiment among white workingmen. The Knights of Labor met at Richmond at their annual meeting. District Assembly No. 49, of New York, had in its representation a Negro, Mr. F. J. Ferrell. He was received at the meetings, but at the theatres and hotels he received continued rebuffs. When it became known that he occupied one of the best seats in the theatre, many persons left the building, and on the next evening the attendance was small, it was said, for the same reason. At the hotel, when the New York delegation appeared, they were told that Mr. Ferrell would not be admitted. A singular expression of loyalty to their comrade was shown by

the delegates who left the place as a group and went to another hotel where no such objections were raised.

Later, in preparation of the program for the exercises in which the Governor of the State was to have part, it was suggested that Mr. Ferrell should be permitted to introduce the Governor. Mr. Powderly, then General Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, stated that this would be a violation of the recognized rule of the community, but that he would consider it an honor to have himself introduced to the assembly by Mr. Ferrell, and he in turn would introduce the Governor. In presenting Mr. Powderly, Mr. Ferrell said that one of the objects of the order was the extinction of the color line and he believed that he was presenting a man who was above this superstition.⁶ This was true in part, for Mr. Powderly had championed the cause of Mr. Ferrell in a letter to *The Richmond Dispatch*, stating that the organization recognized "no line of race, creed, politics or color." This sentiment was in the thought of labor leaders in this decade. McNeill also wrote that "no Mason and Dixon's line, no color tests divide North, South, East and West. Whenever laborers congregate, whether in the factories of New England or the sunless mines of Pennsylvania, one chord of sympathy unites them all. No demagogue's cant of race or creed will hold them from their purpose to be free."⁷

At the same period the American Federation of Labor was started. This organization was formed in 1881 from among the dissatisfied members of the Knights of Labor. The Federation was founded on the principle of self-determination for the local bodies. Its declaration on matters of race was therefore in the nature of advice to the unions. In 1920, the American Federation of Labor was composed of 110 National and International Unions, 1,286 Local and Federal Unions, 46 State Federations and 926 City Central

bodies. The national and international unions have self-government, but the local unions are more circumscribed. At the outset it was declared that associations which refused admission to Negroes were excluded from membership in the Federation. The International Association of Machinists, as we shall note later, was not admitted to membership until the word "white" was removed from its constitution.⁸ Such was the early attitude of the American Federation of Labor. There was to be no division on creed, color, sex or nationality. However, subsequent events were to reveal modifications in the practice of this policy.

Strikes by American workingmen began on a large scale and continued in the decade 1880-1890. The places of the strikers were taken by foreigners and by American Negroes. These substitutions often occasioned bitterness, and only the wisdom of organization leaders prevented bloodshed and violence.⁹ Business failures, unemployment, wage quarrels and racial antipathy gave much discredit to the labor movement in this decade. A declaration by the International Labor Union of America in 1878 stated that race was being arrayed against race in the labor struggle, and that this competition was retarding the progress of all workmen.

In the early days of the labor movement fostered by the American Federation of Labor, the democratic sentiment was so great that there were few evidences on the part of the National organization of any feeling of color. At Birmingham, Alabama, in 1885, the delegates refused to take part in a banquet because there were three Negro delegates who had not been invited. Local unions and national trade organizations often manifested a like liberal spirit. In the same year the Cigarmaker's International Union left a hotel because the Treasurer, who was a Negro, was given a place for the service of his meals outside of

the regular dining room. The Cigarmakers had a large number of Negroes who were members and it appeared that they made no race distinction in their membership.¹⁰ In New Orleans the Negro draymen had formed a Union and they sought to make a wage agreement with their employers. The employers refused to treat with the draymen as Unionmen, whereupon organized labor in New Orleans went on a sympathetic strike and recognition was finally secured.¹¹

The Negro hod-carriers of Wheeling, West Virginia, had formed an organization known as Labor's Progress Assembly. This organization was affiliated with the Knights of Labor. Another assembly, known as Prosperity Assembly, was formed. It was composed of workmen of both races in all trades which were not strong enough in numbers to have separate trade unions formed. The laws of the Knights of Labor allowed the formation of these two unions. It thus happened that most of the Negroes belonged to Labor's Progress Assembly and that there were both white and Negro hod-carriers in the Prosperity Assembly. These workmen often were at work on the same locations and at the same tasks. With the organization of the American Federation of Labor, both groups applied for admission, after withdrawing from the Knights of Labor. One of the rules of the Federation was that all men working at one kind of employment must belong to the same local union. According to this ruling the Negroes and the whites must belong to one Hod-Carriers' Union. Arbitration by the District officers of the Federation was necessary in order to prevent the disruption of both organizations.¹²

In 1899 the same difficulty arose among the longshoremen of Newport News, Virginia. The local unions were composed of Negroes and the whites refused to join them. The question was settled by the issuance of a separate charter to the white workers.¹³

Thus the policy of the American Federation was being trimmed to suit local conditions. Its democratic welcome was changed to the policy of separation along racial lines of white and Negro workmen. Foreigners of all types might be received into the regular old-line organizations but Negroes were placed in separate locals.

The Federation Convention of 1897 passed a resolution condemning the statement reported to have been made that the trades unions were placing obstacles in the path of the economic advance of the Negro worker. The convention reaffirmed its welcome to all ranks of labor, "without regard to creed, color, sex, race or nationality." During this session it was said that an affiliated union had no right to limit its membership so as to debar the Negroes.¹⁴

In spite of these declarations of policy, practical exclusion and separation were in operation, and this action seriously affected the economic status of Negro labor in many localities. In 1900, President Gompers suggested that local unions composed of Negroes should be encouraged and that separate central bodies composed of Negro workers should be established where it was deemed advisable. The convention of 1902 provided that separate charters might be issued to Central Labor Unions, Local Unions and Federal Labor Unions which were composed exclusively of Negro laborers.¹⁵ Thus another step was taken in the separation of the races in their labor organizations.

An investigation concerning the number of Negroes who were in the trades unions was made by Atlanta University in 1902. The list and the tabulations are incomplete and they therefore can be only suggestive of the facts. The following results were reported through correspondence with the trades unions which had a considerable number of Negro members.¹⁶ There were 200 Negro members of the Journeymen Barbers' In-

ternational Union in 1890 and 800 Negro members in 1900. In 1890 there were only 50 Negro members of the International Brick, Tile and Terra-cotta Workers' Alliance and 200 in 1900. There were 1,000 negroes who belonged to the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in 1900. The Carriage and Wagon Workers' International Union reported 240 Negro members in 1890 and 500 in 1900. The Coopers International Union had 200 Negro members and the International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen had 2,700 Negro members in a total membership of 3,600 as reported in 1901. The International Longshoremen's Association had increased its Negro membership from 1,500 in 1890 to 6,000 in 1900. The United Mine Workers of America reported a Negro membership of 20,000 in a total membership of 224,000 in 1901. The Tobacco Workers' International Union reported a decrease. There were 1,500 Negro members in 1890 and 1,000 in 1900. The membership of the Knights of Labor, as would be expected, showed a decrease from 8,000 in 1890 to 6,000 in 1900.

At this period Negroes were not actively encouraged to become members of the trades unions, and it is not surprising that the increases were small, and that in some cases decreases were recorded. The labor unions had not realized the value of organizing Negro workmen. The Negro labor leaders in these organizations continued to urge the recognition of Negro labor. The American Federation of Labor had adopted an indifferent attitude. It would not force its views "upon individual or affiliated unions without their consent." Apparently the fight had to be waged from within the local unions. This was difficult because of the barriers against the admission of Negro workers, in the constitutions, the governing regulations, and the social restrictions of the local labor organizations. The line

of approach which was followed by Negro labor leaders was the continuance of their efforts in both the national and the local fields with the hope that the national organization would decide in the future to take high ground in the organization of Negro labor.

In 1880 a strike among the Miners in the Tuscarawas Valley, Pennsylvania, led to the importation of Negro workers. Similar strikes in other places led to the same results.¹⁷ Such conditions caused greater activity in the organization of Negro labor. It was thought by labor leaders that it was better to have the cooperation of Negro workingmen than to have their competition, and therefore efforts were made to perfect their organization. The local labor unions as a rule would not accept Negroes, and with organizations refusing membership to them and the members refusing to work with them, the Negro's way to skilled labor was effectively barred. In a few instances Negro applications were accepted, but as rapidly as possible separate unions composed exclusively of Negroes were formed. This sentiment was encouraged by the social tradition through which permanent mixed racial unions were regarded as impossible in the South.¹⁸

The railroad brotherhoods began to exclude Negroes by constitutional clauses. The International Association of Machinists, which was organized in 1888, inserted a clause in its constitution excluding Negro workers. The American Federation of Labor refused to admit unions which made distinctions based upon color, and thus the Machinists were excluded. The Federation continued to refuse admission to the Association of Machinists because the organization would not remove the color line. Finally in 1891 the Executive Council of the Federation issued a call for a conference of the unions of the trade, and to this meeting the members of the old organization would send no delegates. The delegates who assembled organized

the International Machinists Union. In the report of President Gompers to the Convention of 1890, it was stated that as soon as the old organization had removed the color line, the new organization would pledge itself to amalgamate with the old organization.¹⁹

At the convention of 1892, a committee of the Federation was appointed to receive the President of the Machinists. He expressed satisfaction at the action of the Executive Council, and said that it was his belief that the Machinists would abolish the barrier against Negroes at their next convention.²⁰ It was not until 1895 that this action was secured and the convention of the Federation of this year withdrew the charter of the new organization, the International Machinists Union.

There were unions which made no distinction of race. The Hotel Employees did not exclude Negroes but they insisted that they should be organized in separate local organizations. The Tobacco Workers made no racial differences in their membership. Their constitution stated that they "will draw no line of distinction between creed, color or nationality." However, in the majority of the trades, separate locals have been demanded from the first, although there were unions in which the two workers met.²¹

In the first annual session of the American Federation of Labor, in 1881, the color question came to the front. The Federation was started from a meeting of the disaffected members of the Knights of Labor. This session was termed the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada. It met at Pittsburgh, September 15-18, 1881. A Negro delegate, Jeremiah Grandison, of the Labor Assembly, Knights of Labor of Pittsburgh, was present. Concerning the purposes of the organization, Mr. Grandison said: "Our object, as I under-

stand it, is to federate the whole laboring element of America. I speak more particularly with a knowledge of my own people and declare to you that it would be dangerous to skilled mechanics to exclude from this organization the common laborers, who might, in an emergency, be employed in positions they could readily qualify themselves to fill." He was urging that the Negroes, who in the main were common laborers, should be organized, but he admitted in his discussion that occasions would arise in which Negroes would be used in higher grades of labor and thereby come in conflict with white workers.²²

Referring to the admission of the various laboring elements to the Federation at the same session, Mr. Pollner, one of the convention secretaries, representing the Trades Assembly of Cleveland, said: "We recognize neither creed, color nor nationality, but want to take into the folds of this federation the whole labor element of the country, no matter what calling." Mr. Gompers said that it should be the purpose not to exclude "Any working man who believes in and belongs to organized labor."²³ No mention was made of Negro labor in the constitution of the American Federation of Labor, but the declaration of its first sessions appear to lead to the conclusion that it was opposed to any racial distinction.

One of the causes for the weakness of the Negro Labor Movement was its lack of organization. No organized efforts had succeeded in creating strong unions among the Negroes. White workmen said that they objected to working with Negroes on this account. Employers said that they could not employ non-union men or their union men would leave. Finally, when there were employers who were bold enough to employ Negroes in spite of the union objections, and when the Negroes became strong competitors with white workmen, the national labor organizations be-

gan to take action. As we have noticed, the American Federation of Labor, at the annual meeting of its National Council in 1910, voted to invite the Negro laborers to enter its ranks along with all races.²⁴ In 1913 this action was reaffirmed. The Federation reported a little later that it had maintained organizers who worked among the Negroes for the purpose of organizing and protecting the interests of labor. There were soon formed unions of exclusive Negro membership, which were affiliated with the Federation, and there were unions composed of whites and blacks who seemed to work together without great friction.²⁵

It is interesting to note, however, that while there were 51 national organizations out of 60 which reported in 1913 that there was no constitutional objections to Negro membership, there were nine which barred Negroes from their organizations. These organizations were: The International Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, The Switchmen's Union, The Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, The Order of Railway Conductors of America, The Order of Railway Telegraphers, The American Wire Weavers Protective Association, The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, and the Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America.²⁶

The apathy of the majority of the members of the labor unions toward the unionization of Negro workers, and the opposition which Negro workers encountered in many places, caused some of them to cooperate with radical labor leaders and radical labor organizations. Militant industrialism therefore found supporters in the Negro group. It was not until 1905 that labor militancy seriously challenged the influence of the normal labor movement. A convention was held in Chicago in this year. The result was the for-

mation of the Industrial Workers of the World. From 1909 to 1917 the I. W. W. enjoyed an increasing numerical strength and influence. Its opposition to the war and the activity of the government in prosecuting its search for internal enemies caused a loss of public favor. When members of the I. W. W. were arrested for breaches of the law in war-time, Negroes were discovered in their number. The presence of Negroes among the radical labor groups is another evidence of their dissatisfaction with the efforts of Organized Labor in their behalf.

Negro thinkers also interested themselves in creating a sentiment among the Negro population which would lead to a more serious consideration of the economic basis of life. Several magazines carried this message to all groups. *The Messenger*, a monthly magazine, published in New York under able editorial direction, sent forth a call for aggressive and organized activity. *Opportunity*, another New York monthly, published under the direction of the National Urban League, assumed a more conservative attitude, but in no less clear and certain terms clamored for a larger opportunity for Negro labor and encouraged labor organization. *The Crisis*, the organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, for years had voiced to the Negro world the need of organized effort in all phases of life. Negro newspapers, such as *The Chicago Defender*, *The Afro-American*, *The New York Age* and others considered the interests of labor fundamental to other interests. In the course of events the results of these activities were the more serious consideration of the needs of Negro labor and a more aggressive assault upon the stronghold of American organized labor.

At the conventions of the American Federation in 1916, 1917 and 1918, the problem created by the appearance of Negro labor was discussed and it was de-

cided that the Negroes ought to be organized. But no effective machinery was created to put this decision into operation. A resolution was also presented at this convention by the San Francisco Labor Council favoring the return to Africa of those Negroes who so desired, deploring the treatment of Negroes in the South and requesting the grant of citizenship rights. The resolution had originally been presented to the San Francisco Labor Council by the International Negro League with the request that it be presented to the convention of the American Federation of Labor. There were objections to this resolution when it was presented and it was amended by the statement that the convention was not responsible for these declarations, and in fact rejected them, but as much of the resolution as concerned the organization of Negro Labor was referred to the Executive Council. In this amended form the resolution was passed.²⁷

The National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes at its meeting in New York City, January 29-31, 1918, passed resolutions urging the organization of Negro labor and protesting against the past attitude of the American Federation of Labor. *The Labor News* of Detroit asserted that the time had come for "the American Labor Movement to face squarely the fact that the Negro is a big factor in our industrial life and that he must be taken into account in the adjustment of our economic differences; never again can the Negro be ignored. Unionism must welcome the Negro to its ranks."²⁸

At the annual meeting of the American Federation in 1918 a letter was read from a committee which represented a number of Negro Organizations. This letter quoted the remarks of President Gompers that Negro workers were welcomed by the Federation and the following suggestions were made: (1) that a published statement of this welcome to Negroes should

be given to the public press, (2) that qualified Negro organizers should be employed by the Federation, (3) that the cooperation of Negro organizations should be encouraged, and (4) that the American Federation of Labor should assume a more advanced position in the matter of Negro workers. The statement was signed by E. K. Jones of the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes; Fred R. Moore, of *The New York Age*; R. R. Morten, of Tuskegee Institute; J. R. Shilladay, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; A. H. Grimke, of the Washington branch of this association; Thomas J. Jones, Educational Director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund; J. H. Dillard, of the Jeannes Fund; G. C. Hall, of the Chicago Urban League. When the letter was presented, it was referred to the committee on organization, which reported a few days later that the Federation viewed with pleasure that the leaders of the race were realizing the necessity of the organization of Negro labor, and a meaningless declaration was offered by the committee urging that the President of the American Federation of Labor should give special attention to the organization of Negro workers. The report of the committee was unanimously adopted.²⁹

At Atlantic City, New Jersey, in 1919, several resolutions in the interest of Negro Labor were introduced. One of these resolutions made the request that the American Federation of Labor consider the application of a representative group for an international charter of organized Negro Labor or exert its influence on the international organizations having jurisdiction over Negro workers, so that charters would be issued to the Negro organizations. Another resolution requested that Negro organizers be appointed since white organizers seemed to have trouble with Negro workmen. A third resolution registered

complaint against the International Union of Metal Trades for its refusal to admit Negroes. The committee to which these resolutions were submitted made a study of the organized labor situation among Negroes. The report stated that there were many Internationals which admitted Negroes and that there were a few, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, which refused to admit Negroes, but the Committee stated that "we hope to see the day when these organizations will take a broader view of this matter." The recommendation was made that in these cases of refusal by the Internationals, the Federation should organize the Negro workers under charters of the Federation. It was also recommended that the Federation Executive Committee should give special attention to the organization of Negro labor by making an assignment of organizers. This action was welcomed in various parts of the country, and it was heralded as the beginning of a new era for Negro Labor.³⁰

The following organizations were reported at this convention as not excluding Negroes from membership: The United Mine Workers of America, The Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, The Longshoremen, The Carpenters, The Textile Workers, The Seamen, The Cigarmakers, The Teamsters, The Plasterers, The Bricklayers, The Maintenance of Way Employees, The Laundry Workers, The Cooks and Waiters, The Tailors, The Brewery Workers, The Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, The Tunnel and Subway Workers, The Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railroad Employees, The International Typographical Union, The Brick and Clay Workers, The Hod Carriers and Building Laborers, The Leather Workers, The Blacksmiths, The Motion Picture Players' Union, The

American Federation of Musicians, The Bakers, The Postal Employees, The American Federation of Teachers, The Steam and Operating Engineers, The Painters, Directors and Paperhangers, The Hotel and Restaurant Employees, The Glass Bottle Blowers, The National Association of Federal Employees, The Barbers' International Union, The Metal Polishers, The Stereotypers and Electrotypers, The Boot and Shoe Workers, The Moulders, The Quarry Workers, The Letter Carriers, The International Furnace Workers, The Civil Engineers' Association of Boston, and the Firemen and Oilers.³¹ While the report asserted that these organizations did not expressly exclude Negroes, yet the Negro applicants have not been welcomed into these organizations and made to feel that they were a vital part of them. They did not expressly exclude Negro membership, but offered little encouragement to them to join.

The most significant action of organized labor in recent times was taken at the Fortieth Convention of the American Federation of Labor in Montreal, June 7-19, 1920. It resulted from the strong presentation of the case for Negro Labor by Negro delegates themselves. Resolutions were presented urging that since the World War was ended, and since the American Negro had fought for the freedom due to all, he himself should not be barred from participation in the freedom for which he had fought, and that therefore American Labor should recognize him. This set of resolutions was signed by delegates of the Freight Handlers' Union of Jonesboro, Arkansas; the Freight Handlers' Union of Cleveland, Ohio; the Railroad Freight Handlers' Union of Wichita Falls, Texas; the Railroad Coach and Station Cleaners' and Porters' Union of Cleveland, Ohio; the Baggage Handlers', Freight Handlers, and the Stationmen's Union, of

Philadelphia; the Federal Labor Union, of Knoxville, Tennessee; and the Coach and Car Cleaners' Union, of Philadelphia.

A second resolution was presented, signed by some of the organizations which are listed above and by several Boilermaker and Blacksmith organizations. It reviewed the fair stand of the American Federation of Labor regarding Negro labor, but it deplored the fact that results had not followed. In order to secure a more successful operation of the Federation among Negroes, it was suggested that (1) a campaign of education among both white and colored workingmen should be conducted in order to convince all persons of "the necessity of bringing into the ranks of labor all men who work, regardless of race, creed or color," that (2) there should be periodic conferences of white and colored leaders with the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor on questions affecting Negro labor, (3) that there should be employed a competent agent as Executive Secretary of a Special Committee on Negro workers at the Washington headquarters and (4) that there should be, in all states, Negro organizers in all crafts whose duty it would be to build up the Negro membership. These resolutions were submitted to the Committee on Organization which reported a few days later its recommendation to strike out sections two and three of the resolution and that section four should be amended to read that Negro organizers be appointed, where necessary, to organize Negro workers. This last recommendation was referred to the Executive Council for action if the funds of the American Federation of Labor should permit.

The committee to which the first resolution was referred reported a strong statement of the attitude of the Federation toward Negro labor. It read, "The American Federation of Labor has never countenanced

the drawing of a color line or discrimination against individuals because of race, creed or color. It recognizes that human freedom is a gift from the Creator to all mankind and is not to be denied to any because of social position or the limitations of caste or class, and that any cause which depends for its success on the denial of this fundamental principle of liberty cannot stand. We, therefore, concur in the resolution and recommend its adoption." The report of the Committee was adopted.

A third group of resolutions was submitted to this convention by representatives of the Railroad Machinists, the Boilermakers, the Blacksmiths, the Sheet Metal Workers, the Carmen, the Painters, and Trade Wagoners. These resolutions accompanied a petition requesting that the American Federation of Labor exercise its influence to have the Internationals accord recognition to the local Negro organizations which should come properly under their jurisdiction. This action was requested since there were a few of the larger organizations which refused admittance to Negroes. There were 110 national and international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and it was said that more than 100 of these admitted Negroes to membership.³² There are eleven national and international unions which refuse by specific ruling to grant the privilege of membership to Negroes. Many other unions discourage Negro membership.³³

It was reported also that four of the six nationals and internationals which were not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor had provisions excluding Negroes. These included the Railroad Brotherhoods. Through a meeting of representatives of 27 different states in 1921, the result of this action was the creation of a Colored National Railroad Organization with Chicago as the headquarters. There were,

however, two organizations, not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor which admitted Negroes—the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and the Industrial Workers of the World.³⁴

The autonomy of the international unions has been respected absolutely by the American Federation of Labor, and their independent government has been conceded. It was therefore an unusual procedure which led this convention to request an affiliated organization to remove an excluding provision from its constitution. The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks had a clause expressly admitting white workers to membership. The constitution of the American Federation of Labor did not contain such a clause. Moreover, at the previous annual convention at Atlantic City, the President of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks had promised to arrange the question of Negro membership in a satisfactory manner. When the Executive Committee to which the matter was referred met in Cincinnati, the question was passed over without action.

At the Montreal Convention, a resolution was presented requesting that the Federation use every means in its power either to have the words "only white" stricken from the constitution of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, or to have this Brotherhood relinquish its jurisdiction over the Negro workers and grant them the privilege of establishing a Brotherhood of their own. The committee on organization to which the resolution was referred, reported that it could not concur in the resolution since the American Federation of Labor could not interfere with the autonomy of the affiliated nationals and internationals. In addition, the report stated that the Negroes had the opportunity to join the Federation, for the Convention of 1919 had authorized the granting of charters to colored

workers in cases where the nationals and internationals had refused to accept them.

A debate followed this report. One delegate asked if it was not contrary to the principles of the American Federation of Labor to draw the color line. Vice-President Duncan replied that the Federation since its organization had stood for federation without reference to color and that this was the position which it still assumed. He stated that the organization could not be expected to favor a charter of an affiliated union which discriminated against a worker because of his color. After some discussion, an amendment to the report was carried requesting the Railway Clerks to remove the words "only white" from their constitution.³⁵ Although this action was contrary to the accepted principle of complete governmental freedom for the internationals, the convention carried the amendment over the recommendation of the committee. It was also voted later that the Brotherhood of Railroad Carmen should eliminate from their constitution all reference to colored workmen.³⁶

At the next annual session of the American Federation of Labor at Denver, Colorado, it was stated that there were still some internationals which excluded Negroes. Jordan W. Chambers, a Negro delegate, said that the convention had ordered the word "white" stricken out, and also that conferences should be held between the officers of the internationals and the Negroes who sought membership, but that in a few cases only had action been taken. He advocated effective action on the part of the Federation. Specific complaints were presented against the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, the Iron Ship Builders and Helpers of America, the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, the Freight Handlers, Express and Station

Employees, calling attention to either exclusion or discrimination. A motion that there should be no discriminating laws in organized labor failed of adoption. In response to one resolution, President Gompers said that "The American Federation of Labor, almost from its inception, has declared that it is the duty of all workers to organize regardless of sex, nationality, race, religion or political affiliation. That declaration has been emphasized time and time again in the conventions of the American Federation of Labor; that declaration forms a part of the literature issued by the American Federation of Labor. That is the policy and principle of the American Federation of Labor, but it cannot enforce that declaration upon the affiliated international unions if those international unions decline or refuse to adopt them." However, conferences were ordered with the internationals within 90 days, with the object in view of having them change their attitude toward Negro labor.⁸⁷

In July, August and September, 1921, as a result of conferences in Washington and at Toronto, organizations of Negro Freight Handlers and Station Employees were organized and Negroes were granted admission to other unions. The Brotherhood of Railroad Carmen agreed to admit separate lodges of Negroes under the jurisdiction of the nearest white local.⁸⁸ The American Federation of Labor has thus sanctioned the principle of race separation, although in words of declaration and policy it has proclaimed the necessity for all workers to organize. Racial barriers have made their way into the ranks of labor. There are some organizations where Negro and white workmen work and meet side by side. It is reported that this is the situation among the Longshoremen, the Garment Workers, the Candy Makers, the Stenographers and a few of the Building Trades. At the Biennial Session of the International Longshoremen's

Convention at Buffalo, New York, in July, 1921, there were 80 Negro delegates who were present. Sixty-five of these delegates were from the North and 15 were from the South.

As a rule, however, the organization of Negro labor has not been encouraged as much as the organization of other groups. This is unfortunate, in view of the fact that Negroes form so large a part of the economic life of the United States. One of the significant results of the indifference of the American Federation of Labor has been the tendency for Negro Labor to organize itself independent of White Labor. The most important national organizations which have been organized on this basis are, The International Order of Colored Locomotive Firemen, The National Order of Locomotive Firemen, and The Shopmen's Craft of the Railway Men's International Benevolent Industrial Association. At Birmingham, Alabama, in January, 1921, a National Federation of Railway Men was organized. In May of that year a meeting of these groups was held in the same city, at which there were delegates from 15 states and railroad workers from 26 railroads. In addition to these persons there were representatives from 150 international trade organizations who were present. This type of independent organization may be expected to continue so long as Organized Labor does not give a ready welcome to Negro Workers.

This attitude of Organized Labor has led, on the one hand, to renewed agitation by Negroes themselves in the interest of the organization of Negro Labor and, on the other, to an increase in the possibility of radicalism among Negroes. At the 1924 Convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the following statement in the form of an open letter was presented:

"AN OPEN LETTER TO THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
LABOR AND OTHER GROUPS OF ORGANIZED LABOR

Gentlemen:

For many years the American Negro has been demanding admittance to the ranks of union labor.

For many years your organizations have made public profession of your interest in Negro labor, of your desire to have it unionized, and of your hatred of the black 'scab.'

Notwithstanding this apparent surface agreement, Negro labor in the main is outside the ranks of organized labor, and the reason is, first, that white union labor does not want black labor, and, secondly, black labor has ceased to beg admittance to union ranks because of its increasing value and efficiency outside the unions.

We thus face a crisis in inter-racial labor conditions; the continued and determined race prejudice of white labor, together with the limitation of immigration, is giving black labor tremendous advantage. The Negro is entering the ranks of semi-skilled and skilled labor and he is entering mainly and necessarily as a 'scab.' He broke the great steel strike. He will soon be in a position to break any strike when he can gain economic advantage for himself.

On the other hand, intelligent Negroes know full well that a blow at organized labor is a blow at all labor; that black labor today profits by the blood and sweat of labor leaders in the past who have fought oppression and monopoly by organization. If there is built up in America a great black bloc of non-union laborers who have a right to hate unions, all laborers, black and white, eventually must suffer.

Is it not time, then, that black and white labor got together? Is it not time for white unions to stop bluff-

ing and for black laborers to stop cutting off their noses to spite their faces?

We, therefore, propose that there be formed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Federation of Labor, the Railway Brotherhoods and any other bodies agreed upon, an Inter-racial Labor Commission.

We propose that this Commission undertake:

1. To find out the exact attitude and practice of national labor bodies and local unions toward Negroes, and of Negro labor toward unions.

2. To organize systematic propaganda against racial discrimination on the basis of these facts at the great labor meetings, in local assemblies, and in local unions.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People stands ready to take part in such a movement and hereby invites the cooperation of all organized labor. The association hereby solemnly warns American laborers that unless some such step as this is taken, and taken soon, the position gained by organized labor in this country is threatened with irreparable loss."

About the same time the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes established a Department of Industrial Relations. Some of the purposes of this department were: to encourage friendly relations between white and black workingmen; to encourage technical education; "the organization and assistance of Negro mechanics; and the opening and finding of positions for Colored workers." The major part of the work of the Urban League in at least 29 cities is aid to Negro workmen. At its meeting in Detroit in 1919 the League adopted the following resolution concerning unionism—"We believe that Negroes should begin to think more and more in terms of labor-group move-

ments, so as ultimately to reap the benefit of thinking in unison. To this end we advise Negroes to organize with white men whenever conditions are favorable. When this is not possible, they should band together to bargain with employers and with organized labor alike. With America and the whole world in labor turmoil, we urge white and black men, capital and labor, to be fair and patient with each other while a just solution is being worked out." The Inter-racial Committees in various parts of the country have taken great interest in improving the condition of Negro workingmen.

Radicalism has taken new developments among Negro laborers since the World War. Sympathy for Russia's new experiment was not unknown among Negro-Americans from the first. The declarations of the Russian labor congresses seemed to ring true on racial matters. The Fourth Congress of the Third Internationale in 1922 declared that its purpose was "not simply the organization of the enslaved white workers of Europe and America, but equally the organization of the oppressed colored peoples of the World." It was also agreed that it would "fight for race equality of the Negro with the white people, as well as for equal wages and political and social rights." The fact that radicalism among Negroes was being organized was demonstrated in the American Negro Labor Congress of 1925. This Congress met in Chicago, October 25-31. The addresses and resolutions attacked the policies of Organized Labor, in words which declared that "the failure of the American Federation of Labor officialdom, under pressure of race prejudice benefitting only the capitalists of the North and South, to stamp out race hatred in the unions, to organize Negro workers, and to build a solid front of the workers of both races against American Capitalism, is a crime against the whole working class. If

the unions of the American Federation of Labor, through ignorance and prejudice, fail in this duty to the American workers and continue a policy of exclusion in the face of the influx of Negro workers into industry, we Negro workers must organize our own unions as a powerful weapon with which to fight our way into the existing labor movement on a basis of full equality." Thus the Negro asserts his own right to organize if neglected by others. The American Negro Labor Congress was sponsored by the Workers Party of America, and with its appeal on the basis of racial equality there is no doubt that the influences of this group will be predominant. If the conservative old-line labor organization will not accept the proffer of cooperation, Negro Labor will find its own way to organization. This is demonstrated in the recent organization of the Pullman Porters through the able leadership of Mr. A. Philip Randolph, Editor of *The Messenger*. At the present writing, in spite of the opposition of the Pullman Company and the apathy of some of the porters themselves, over one-half of these workers are organized.

If Negroes perform, as it has been asserted, one-seventh of the labor in the United States, the labor organizations of America can never be effective until the great mass of Negro workers are organized. The complaint cannot be made continuously that the Negro does not take to the unions and that he is not a "union-man." No workman who finds it to his interest to remain a non-union man will ever give up the privilege. Membership in a union should offer some advantage to the Negro. To every white workingman the union offers superior advantages. When union men strike, non-union men have large opportunity. These instances have been the occasions on which Negro labor has entered avenues which were hitherto closed to it.⁸⁹ In the Steel Strike of 1919-1920,

Negroes were employed as strike-breakers, and in the coal strike of 1922 Negroes were introduced into the Pennsylvania coal fields. The result in each case was the realization among union workers that Negroes should be unionized. The United Mine Workers made strenuous efforts to bring Negroes into the local unions in the latter instance. Therefore, in the interest of itself, Organized Labor must organize the Negro workingmen. For this work Negro organizers should be appointed. In the present state of our race relations, it is exceedingly difficult for the average white organizer to sympathize fully with the special problems of Negro Labor and to encourage effectively its organization. The migration, with the resulting transfer of Negroes from agriculture to industry, has increased the necessity for *action* and not finely phrased declarations by Organized Labor.

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CHAPTER X

ON THE THRESHOLD OF MODERN INDUSTRY

THE World War of 1914 brought on the dawn of a day of new opportunity for Negro Labor. For the first time in American history, opportunities, large in number, in skilled as well as unskilled labor, were offered to Negro workmen. They had served as the labor supply for the South, but the Northern field of labor had not been opened largely to them until the beginning of the World War. For several decades a slow evolution in labor processes had been going on among the Negro group by which the transition was being made from unskilled labor to skilled labor. In the period prior to the War, Negro labor had made its appearance for the first time in skilled industry. The War industries increased the demand for labor and hundreds of Negroes who had been the dependents, the laborers, carpenters, blacksmiths, janitors, porters, waiters, farm hands, and servants, entered many types of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled labor.

With the opening of the War in Europe, there were several ways of escape for the Negro laborers of the South from dissatisfying economic conditions. They could remain in the South and struggle for larger labor opportunities, while social and economic pressure compelled them to remain in the occupational groups to which Southern labor conditions had assigned them. They could leave the country and find a home in Africa or the West Indies and create new economic futures for themselves. They could go to the land of the

North and the West, and there they could find themselves freed from the shadow of economic oppression and within reach of large economic opportunity. With a determination which worked silently and persistently, thousands of Negroes moved from practically every part of the South toward the North and the Middle West.

The entire migratory movement of recent date may be divided into two periods. The first was from 1916-1919; the zenith of the period being reached in 1917-1918. The second period began in 1921 and continued through 1923. The numbers in the two periods appear to be about equally divided. In the first period, the influence of war-time manufacture was at work, and in the second period, the labor demand created by restricted immigration. Various estimates have been made of the numbers who came to the Northern and Western industrial centers. These estimates run from 150,000 to 1,000,000.¹ Dr. James H. Dillard, of the Jeanes and Slater funds, estimated that the migrants who came prior to 1918 ranged from 150,000 to 350,000, about 200,000 being nearer the exact number. During 1920 and 1921, there was a temporary ebb in the migratory tide, due, in part, to the return of the days of large foreign immigration. Mr. Karl F. Phillips, Commissioner of Conciliation, especially detailed to observe the migration of Negroes, estimates that during these periods there were between 800,000 and 900,000 Negroes who came North.²

It is very easy to exaggerate the number of migrants, and it is probable that some eye-witnesses have been led into errors. The census of 1920 shows that there were 472,418 more Negroes in the Northern and Western states than in 1910. The Negro population in the Southern states increased only 2 per cent while the Northern Negro population had increased 19 per cent, and in the group of states North of the Mason

and Dixon line there was an increase of 44 per cent in the Negro population. About 9,000,000 Negroes still live in the Southern states. While there may be some error even in these calculations, yet the census figures lead to the conclusion that the migration could not have been of such alarming proportions as the extreme reports have asserted.

The movement of Negroes from the South has been continuous.³ The recent movement, however, has been the only one to effect seriously the labor situation. Its rise and its decline has been influenced directly by the conditions of labor. Negro laborers were not chosen because of preference for them but because of necessity. An emergency had arisen and the Negroes were the only sources of relief. The steel plants, the mills, the corporations of the North saw the supply at hand, and Negro laborers were called to the work.⁴

When the movement was at its zenith, during the first period, in 1917, it was estimated that the exodus had brought the following numbers from the Southern states:⁵

Alabama	90,000
Virginia	49,000
Georgia	48,897
North Carolina.....	35,576
Mississippi	35,291
South Carolina.....	27,560
Arkansas	23,628
Tennessee	22,632
Kentucky	21,855
Louisiana	16,912
Texas	10,870
Florida	10,291
Oklahoma	5,836

In 1922, restricted immigration and the demand for labor in the North again set the Negroes in a migration which continued during the following year. A release

from the Department of Labor in October, 1923, stated that nearly half a million Negro migrants had left their Southern homes for Northern ones. This estimate was based upon figures submitted by State, Municipal and Civic statisticians, and they show that the migration had not ended by 1923. The following table shows the population, the number of migrants and the per cent of migration from the Southern states:⁶

State	Population	Number of Migrants	Per Cent of Total Migrants
Alabama	900,652	90,000	18.8
Arkansas	472,220	5,000	1.1
Florida	329,487	90,000	18.8
Georgia	1,206,365	120,600	25.2
Kentucky	235,938	2,500	.5
Louisiana	700,257	15,000	3.1
Mississippi	935,184	82,600	17.3
North Carolina	763,407	25,000	5.2
Oklahoma	149,408	1,000	.2
South Carolina	864,719	25,000	5.2
Tennessee	451,758	10,000	2.1
Texas	741,694	2,000	.4
Virginia	690,017	10,000	2.1
Total	8,441,106	478,700	100.0

That this movement was continuing at its height in 1923 is shown not only by the report of the Department noted above, but also by the statement of S. H. McLean, District Passenger Agent of the Southern Railway System. He said, in June, 1923, "Last week more Negroes left South Carolina over our trains than during any other similar period of the migration movement that I can recall."⁷

Many authorities who sent in reports stated that the places of those who left certain sections seemed to be kept filled by the migrations within the sections, and an economic adjustment was taking place without great inconvenience. Another release from the Department of Labor at the same time made the estimate that the migrants had come during nearly ten months at the rate of 26,000 monthly. The Director of the Detroit Urban League stated during the same period

that at least 500,000 Negroes had moved North since the beginning of 1922.⁸

The destination of these migrants seems to have been the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and New Jersey.⁹ Manufacturing cities, railroad centers, the call of high wages, and the letters of friends and relatives, were the determining factors in the location of the newcomers. There was a tendency, also, to move about after the first arrival from the South. Nevertheless, the same tendency was shown in the South itself, where in 1910, the movement to the West—South-Central Division,—the states of Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas—was marked by a net gain of 194,658 persons, who were born in other Southern states than in those in which they resided at the time of the census enumeration. The South Atlantic states at the same period reported a loss of 392,827.¹⁰ Without doubt, some of these persons came to the North, but the figures show a group restlessness and the presence of the desire to move, even among those who remained in the South.

This restless spirit was encouraged by the conditions under which many rural Negroes were forced to live. The peonage system has been rampant in the South. The Arkansas riots of 1919 developed from the peon existence which Negro farmers were forced to live. When they united their counsels in order to demand an accounting of their landlords, they were accused of conspiracy to murder the white planters. These Negroes, seeking only to protect themselves, were killed by the hundreds. Conditions in Georgia were made known in 1921, when the owner of a plantation in Jasper County had eleven of his workers murdered in order to prevent the facts of peonage from becoming known to investigating federal officers. This case caused Governor Hugh M. Dorsey to publish a pamphlet on *The Negro in Geor-*

gia, in which many cases of peonage and economic exploitation were described.¹¹ With these conditions in existence and with the apprehension created by the publicity occasioned by these discoveries, the basis was laid for a migration of the Negro population. They moved from the country to the city and from the South to the North.

Migration to the cities has affected the Negroes as well as the white population. City life has been no respecter of persons in its attractions. The result of this movement to the cities has been the organization of the typical Negro community, which in many respects is slowly becoming self-sufficing. There are Negro churches, banks, theatres, moving-picture houses, drug-stores, hospitals, insurance organizations and small business enterprises which are taking the places of those formerly owned, to a great extent, by the Jew and the foreigner. In these urban centers, the Negro professional men and women have taken advantage of the segregated situation, and physicians, lawyers, ministers, dentists, real estate agents, and undertakers from among the Negro group have been growing in number as a consequence of the larger field for their services.

The percentage of the Negroes who lived in rural communities has been decreasing for several decades, and the urban percentage has been increasing.

THE RURAL AND URBAN PERCENTAGE OF THE NEGRO POPULATION

Year	Rural	Urban
1890	80.6	19.4
1900	77.3	22.7
1910	72.6	27.4
1920	66.0	34.0

This trend toward the cities soon created an interest among students of social conditions, and there arose in New York in 1905, several committees which were

seeking to improve the living and working conditions among Negroes. These committees included, The Committee for Improving Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York, The National League for the Protection of Colored Women and finally with the advice and cooperation of Mr. L. Hollingsworth Wood, Mr. William H. Baldwin, Miss Frances A. Keller, Mr. William J. Schieffelin, Mr. A. S. Frissell, Mr. Fred R. Moore, Dr. Eugene P. Roberts and Dr. George E. Haynes, the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes was organized with Dr. Haynes as Executive Secretary. In 1911, Mr. Eugene Kinckle Jones became Executive Secretary.

It was the purpose of the organization, at this time, among other objects:

First, to organize the workers in various occupations, skilled and unskilled, into associations that will aim to stimulate the workers themselves to improve their condition and efficiency.

Second, to open a vocational bureau or labor exchange to operate along two lines:

(a) to develop an employment-finding scheme in cooperation with philanthropic and with commercial employment agencies.

(b) to establish a standard of efficiency for workers; direct the inefficient into channels of training; and develop sympathy and appreciation among employers of Negro labor.¹²

In 1916 when the migration was rising, the League issued a call for a conference on migration. As a result of this conference, recommendations were issued to employers and to the migrants, and the proposal was made for the establishment of some Negro in the government department of labor who could assist in labor problems affecting the Negro. Branches of the Urban League were soon established in urban

centers of large Negro populations, in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, until there were nearly forty cities where there were branch leagues. Industrial workers were employed by many of the city organizations.

Another result of the war-time movement of the Negro population and its entrance into industry was the creation of the office of Director of Negro Economics. On May 1, 1918, Dr. George E. Haynes was called from the Department of Sociology at Fisk University in order to fill this office. The plans called for the organization of cooperative committees of white and colored citizens, the holding of conferences on labor problems, and the appointment of Negro staff and field workers. Reports were sent to the Secretary of Labor and cooperation on the field was encouraged so that labor difficulties might not be further complicated with the problems of race. The office of Director of Negro Economics was abolished shortly after the close of the War, but the work was carried on by Mr. Phil. H. Brown as Conciliator of Labor, and on the death of Mr. Brown, Mr. Karl F. Phillips,—the present incumbent—who had been an assistant in both offices, was appointed Conciliator. Throughout the period of the migration, this office was in operation, and at the present time, it is a kind of clearing house for information on Negro labor.

In the meanwhile the migration was continuing. Responding to the impulse of those forces which have always produced the movements of populations, and heeding the call of the temporary, and the differences in the economic, social and political conditions between the Northern and the Southern sections of the United States, vast movements of the Negro populations have taken place within recent decades. The sectional migration has been brought about generally in response

to the universal tendency among all peoples to seek better conditions of living and to move to the places where struggles are less intense and where rewards are greater. The basic factors in these movements were economic factors. Without the influence engendered by these factors, it is difficult to conceive of the movement. These factors were silently at work prior to the War. The transition of the United States since 1880 from agriculture to manufacturing, relatively diminished the demand for agricultural labor and increased the demand for skilled labor, which in turn called for a large number of persons to do the rough work about the factories. In spite of its ultimate cost, cheap, unskilled labor has been used extensively in some industries, and Negroes and foreigners have furnished the bulk of this labor.

While the War developed new industries contributing to the manufacture of war supplies, and stimulated old industries to new action, it also lessened the number of foreigners. As a consequence, more laborers were demanded to take the places made vacant by the cutting off of the former supply. The Bureau of Immigration reported the following immigrants between 1910 and 1923.¹³

1910	1,041,570
1911	878,587
1912	838,172
1913	1,197,892
1914	1,218,480
1915	326,700
1916	298,826
1917	295,403
1918	110,618
1919	141,132
1920	430,001
1921	805,228
1922	309,556
1923	373,511

In 1910, in 1913, and in 1914, the immigration to America was above the one million mark. The War caused a decline in the number of immigrants. The average for the five year period, 1915-1919 was 234,536. In 1921, there was a large increase to 805,228, which approached the pre-war numbers. The new immigration law of May 1921, caused a sudden decrease to 309,556. It has been often asserted that the shortage in labor during the war-period was due also to the return to their mother countries of many European immigrants. This fact is not shown in the figures for the departure of immigrants. The number who departed was smaller in the years 1915-1919 than in earlier and later periods. The labor shortage was due, therefore, more to decreased immigration and labor demands than to departing emigrants.¹⁴

This change in the number of immigrants into America was at the basis of the Negro migration during the war. It is difficult to conceive of successful results for so extensive a movement of the Negro population without the condition of decreasing immigration. There were other forces in operation in the South which contributed to the movement. There were the losses in the cotton areas occasioned by the boll-weevil during the summers of 1915 and 1916. The destruction of much of the cotton crop was reported in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Florida.¹⁵ The income of the owners of plantations was affected by the fall in the price of cotton, and their payment of wages or of shares reflected this result, so that agricultural laborers complained particularly of oppressive economic conditions.

The city of Washington was a railroad terminus for a large number who were coming from the seaboard states. At this period, I personally questioned a large number of immigrants as they came into Union Station in order to secure at first-hand the causes for

their movements. The answers were carefully noted, analyzed, and tabulated, so that the statements of the causes which are given here have been taken from the words of the migrants themselves. Among these causes, there were:

Economic exploitation as shown by low wages and depressing working conditions.

Insecurity of life occasioned by rumors of lynchings and mob violence.

Insecurity of property caused by high mortgage and interest rates, and the lack of credit for Negro farmers. "Jim Crow" laws.

Crop failures due to boll-weevil and floods.

Lack of employment.

Poor school facilities.

The denial of justice in the courts, and the right to vote.

Discontent with the living conditions in southern segregated areas.

The attraction of the North created through letters from relatives and friends.

The labor demand of the North.

Unfair treatment of share-croppers and tenants.

The activity of labor agents.

The desire to travel and to find new locations.

It is apparent, as this list is read, that the migration was largely due to economic causes, but there were, also, contributing social and political ones. There was a state of unrest among the Negro population of the South, and a rampant dissatisfaction; and with a supposed Promised Land beckoning, the desire to move was not long in making itself manifest in action. The labor agents of railroads and steel mills were active in assisting the movement by their personal visits to the homes of prospective migrants, and by the placards which they spread through the communities. In some sections, they were compelled to secure licenses, in other places, they were prohibited and if

caught they were arrested and fined. Negro newspapers of the North encouraged the Negroes to come North. They carried advertisements containing offers of attractive wages and their editorials gave greater publicity to the labor opportunities of the North.¹⁶

The wage differences between the North and the South played no little part in causing this migration. The male farm laborers of the South were receiving 50 cents to 75 cents per day during the War period. Women and children were receiving 35 cents to 40 cents a day. It was reported that in Georgia, in 1916, some farm hands had been paid from \$10 to \$12 per month.¹⁷ The urban workers were paid from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per day in the mills and shops. Skilled workers, such as carpenters and bricklayers, received from \$2.00 to \$3.50 per day. In the North these figures were doubled, and in the case of farm hands, trebled. The former agricultural laborers and domestic servants of the South were able to earn in the North almost as much in a day as they had earned in the South in a week.

A study of the migrants in Pittsburgh showed that 56 per cent of the workers had received less than \$2.00 per day for work in the South. On the contrary, only 5 per cent worked for this wage in Pittsburgh. Twenty-five per cent had received \$2.00 to \$3.00 per day in the South and 62 per cent received this amount in Pittsburgh. Four per cent had received \$3.00 to \$3.60 in the South and 28 per cent received these sums in Pittsburgh. 13,000 Negroes were employed in the industrial plants of Detroit during 1923 at daily wages ranging from \$3.50 to \$10.00 per day.¹⁸

The Division of Negro Economics of the United States Department of Labor, made a study during 1918 of business enterprises and labor conditions in 26 states and the District of Columbia. Twelve of the states were in the South and fourteen were in the

North. Interesting comparisons are shown by the different wages in the two principal sections of the United States. Unskilled foundry workers in Alabama received \$2.50 for a ten-hour day. The same workers in Illinois received \$3.20 per ten-hour day, to \$4.25 per nine-hour day. There were differences which were manifested in some Southern states also. For example, in Tennessee, \$2.50 per ten-hour day was given for unskilled foundry work, and in Virginia the workers received \$3.50 to \$4.00 per ten-hour day.¹⁹ An examination of the relation of these wages reveals the fact that in war time, with the height of wages reached, the North paid a higher money-wage than did the South. Living costs varied in the two sections, and the actual money received is not a true index of the standard of living in the two sections.

The Negroes who came North in the waves of migration had not been unthrifty workers. They did not come as paupers. Many brought their life-savings with them. They sold their property and brought sums ranging from \$50.00 to \$1,500. With this money, homes were purchased and the foundation was laid for new economic futures in a freer environment.²⁰ The new prosperity did not cause the Negro workers to lose their former thrift. A canvass of the bank accounts of Negro workers was made by the United States Department of Labor covering typical industrial centers to which large numbers of migrants had come. This investigation covered the sixty-nine banks carrying the savings of Negroes during the period from December 31, 1920, to April 30, 1921.²¹

	December 31, 1920	April 30, 1921
The Number of Depositors	47,368	47,699
Total Amount of Savings	\$3,809,809	\$3,721,474
Amount of Savings Per Capita.....	\$80	\$78

During this period of four months there was an increase in the number of depositors, a decrease in the

amount of the savings, and a small decrease in the amount of savings per capita. Considering the fact that this investigation was made during a temporary industrial depression, this showing is creditable to the group. It is evident that Negro Labor was not squandering its earnings.

The migrants were not all of one type. In fact, three groups may be distinguished (1) the unskilled, who were the farm workers and domestic servants of the South. They came seeking better wages and living conditions, and to do whatever work they could find; (2) the skilled workers who were the carpenters, bricklayers and iron workers of the South. They were attracted by the reports of high wages and better conditions for skilled work in the North; (3) the adventurous, wandering type who were just tired of their old haunts and longed for new ones. They came seeking to find whatever work was offered them. These newcomers, as a whole, found work of the unskilled kind in the large cities to which the majority of them found their way.

The report of the United States Coal Commissioner shows that 42,489 Negroes out of 525,152 workers were engaged in the bituminous and anthracite mines. The largest number of Negro miners worked in West Virginia and Alabama.

In Pittsburgh, it was reported that they were engaged in a number of plants. The larger number of them were doing unskilled work, which is true of other race groups in industrial pursuits. There were 4,000 with the Carnegie Steel Company in 1918, 95 per cent of whom were engaged in unskilled work. In 1916, this company employed 1,500. The Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company had 1,500 in its employ, 90 per cent of whom were engaged in skilled labor. In 1916, there had been only 25 Negroes in the employ of this company. The Press

Steel Car Company employed 25 Negroes in 1916, and the same number in 1918, 50 per cent of whom were engaged in unskilled labor. The Crucible Steel Company had 400 Negro workers, 90 per cent of whom were unskilled workers.²²

In the shipbuilding districts, under the jurisdiction of the United States Shipping Board during the War, there were 24,648 Negroes employed and 14,075 of them were kept in employment until September, 1919. Of these, 4,963, or about 20.7 per cent, were engaged in what may be termed skilled occupations, and 19,685, or about 79.3 per cent, were in semi-skilled and unskilled occupations. After the close of the War, 3,872, or 27 per cent, were in the skilled occupations, and 10,203, or 72.53 per cent, were in the semi-skilled and skilled occupations. Negroes were listed in 46 of the 55 shipbuilding occupations during the war, and in 49 of the 55 after the War. There were 25 occupations with 10 or more Negroes. The occupations with the largest number of skilled workers were: 1,464 carpenters, 225 caulkers, 21 chippers and caulkers, 631 riveters, 22 foremen, 240 drillers and reamers, 399 bolters. The decrease in skilled and semi-skilled occupations after the war was only 20.7 per cent or about one-fifth, while the decrease in unskilled occupations was about 48 per cent or about one-half. It can be seen that Negroes had entered the skilled occupations as well as the unskilled, and after the War they remained in the skilled occupations in larger proportion than in the unskilled occupations.²³

The experience of the Shipping Board with Negro labor was reported as very satisfactory. Moreover, private companies employing Negro labor returned the same report. Some companies in Pennsylvania rated the Negro skilled workers as "first class mechanics" and stated that they were the most efficient workers in the shops. Reports from a Metal and Boiler

Company stated emphatically that "Negro employees are as efficient as the whites." The National Malleable Casting Company of Cleveland, Ohio, which has nine large plants, reported that it had employed Negroes for a number of years. Some of them had served continuously for periods of five to twenty-five years. This Company employed Negro moulders, core makers, chippers, locomotive crane operators, melting furnace operators, general foremen, foremen, assistant foremen, clerks and timekeepers. In fact, the Personnel Manager stated that there was no work in the shop which the Negro workers could not do and do well if they had the proper supervision.²⁴

The world's pile-driving record was broken by Edward Burwell and his crew of eleven men employed by the Arthur McMullen Company on Shipway No. 46, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The record drive prior to the feat by this crew was 165 piles in 9 hours. Mr. Burwell's crew drove 220 65-foot piles in 9 hours and five minutes. Another unusual feat was performed by a crew of Negro riveters at Sparrows Point, Maryland, in the Bethlehem steel plant. One of the crew, Charles Knight drove 4,875 three-quarter inch rivets in 9 hours. The highest record prior to this was 4,442, which was made in a Scottish shipyard.²⁵ Arabelle Croxton of the Cleveland Hardware Company turned out 18,500 pieces on the punching press in eight hours. This was at the rate of two pieces every three seconds and was the fastest company record. Edward Freeman, in the same company, worked up from the smallest hammers to the 2,000 pound hammer and was considered "one of the best drop hammermen in our plant." These individual records and the showing made by the Negro group as a whole have helped to call the attention of the labor world to the possibilities for Negroes in industry.

There were over five hundred industries in which

Negroes were working in Detroit in 1922, and there were twenty-five corporations with more than one hundred Negroes on the pay-rolls. The Ford Motor Company employed 5,000 Negroes in a total of 110,000 workers. The Dodge Motor Company gave employment to 1,400 Negro workers in a total of 18,000 workers. The Packard Company employed 700. The Vice-President of this company stated that in both skilled and unskilled labor, the Negroes had been good workers, and that they were "considerably better" than the average foreigner. The statement concluded with the prophecy that the real future of Negroes in America was to be found in industry.²⁶ A Forging and Stamping Company in Cleveland employed, in 1925, 1,800 workers, of whom 700 were Negroes. Of this number of Negro workers, 25 per cent were classed as skilled. A few of them held minor executive positions and had purchased stock in the Company. Slowly, Negro labor in the North was entering skilled factory work. A survey by the Department of Labor in 1923 shows that 273 firms who reported to the Department were employing 60,427 Negroes, of whom 45,470 were unskilled and 14,957 were skilled; that is, a little less than 25 per cent were skilled workers.²⁷ In the Worthington Pump and Machine Works, many Negro workers have been employed for years. In the foundry division, in 1925, 50 per cent of the machine moulders were Negroes. Some of them had been advanced from the lowest laboring grades. The entire cupola gang was composed of Negroes.

The facts of the transition to skilled labor which are revealed by these investigations in industrial centers are supported by the census reports on occupations for 1920. The changes are more significant when the census of 1910 is compared with the census of 1920. In the report of the Census of 1920, there was a

shift of 371,229 Negroes from agricultural pursuits to industrial pursuits. In 1910, 27 per cent of the Negro male workers were farm laborers, and in 1920, they were only 16.5 per cent in this group. The total proportion of Negroes, 10 years and over, who were engaged in agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry decreased from 39.5 per cent in 1910 to 27 per cent in 1920. The number engaged in mechanical and manufacturing pursuits increased over 125 per cent. The proportion of Negro males in industry increased about 25 per cent during the decade, and Negro women who were engaged in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits increased by nearly 50 per cent, that is, from 1.8 per cent to 2.6 per cent. Those who were engaged in domestic and personal service decreased 5.1 per cent. The decrease for Negro males was from 7.4 per cent to 6.8 per cent, and for Negro females from 23.2 per cent to 19.5 per cent. According to the census of 1920, 59.9 per cent of the total Negro population over ten years of age were gainfully employed, while 46.6 per cent of the native whites and 49.7 per cent of the native whites of mixed parentage were gainfully employed. Over three times as many Negro boys as white boys were at work, and five times as many Negro wives as wives in any other group.

However, a large group continued in agriculture. There were 926,708 Negro farmers in the United States, according to the latest report of the Bureau of Census. Of this group, 218,612 were owners, 2,026 were managers, and 705,070 were tenants. Negro farmers formed 14.7 per cent of the total number of farmers, while they formed only 9.9 per cent of the total population. Between 1910 and 1920, the number of Negro farmers increased 3.7 per cent, while the native white farmers increased 3.1 per cent,

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and the white foreign born farmers decreased 13.2 per cent.

The South has given up not only a mass of unskilled labor, but a large number of skilled workers. An analysis was made by the Department of Labor of the payrolls of 273 employers of Negro labor, during the year prior to April 30, 1923, in the states of California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Ohio and Wisconsin. The industries represented such typical ones as those engaged in the production of iron and steel, foodstuffs, leather, machinery, tobacco, automobiles, paper bags, copper goods, boilers, billiard tables, brass articles, chain bricks, oil, saws, wire, railroad equipment, rubber, glass, textiles, chinaware, cement, paper and varied other articles. Other occupations included transportation, construction and railroad work.

During the year, the Negro workers on the payrolls increased by 18,050. Of this number 13,893 were unskilled and 4,157 were skilled. The skilled workers increased 38.5 per cent and the unskilled increased 44.0 per cent. The increases for both groups in the selected states are:²⁸

INCREASE OF SKILLED AND UNSKILLED NEGRO WORKERS

April 1922—April 1923

States	Increase Per Cent.	Skilled Per Cent.	Unskilled Per Cent.
Maryland	55.48	186.86	27.67
Connecticut	88.74	90.48	88.58
Michigan	66.77	70.73	62.48
Kansas	40.42	68.97	37.13
Ohio	69.93	68.04	71.21
California	66.67	60.00	68.00
Pennsylvania	64.91	43.68	77.52
Illinois	45.14	39.94	46.69
Wisconsin	58.24	33.33	60.48
New York	37.19	30.00	39.79
Indiana	70.17	18.18	102.86
Kentucky	24.00	13.93	27.15
New Jersey	74.82	12.96	85.15
Oklahoma	14.10	3.85	15.67

The report also estimated that during the last five years the number of Negroes in the Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries had increased by 255,389 and in Personal and Domestic Service that there had been a decrease of 57,642. It is evident that an increasing number of Negroes were engaging in mechanical pursuits and that they are turning from domestic service to other pursuits, so that the proportions of the occupations of the Negro group are showing a readjustment in occupational classification.

Negro workers on the Steam Railway Lines of the United States are in large numbers and in many activities. There were 136,065 Negro railroad workers in the United States. The popular opinion is that Negroes are only train and Pullman porters, but of the 136,065 only 20,224 are in the group of porters. There were 2 Negro officials and superintendents who were located in Ohio and in Florida, 97 telegraphers, 111 engineers, 6,478 firemen, 202 inspectors of ways and structures, 202 telegraph and telephone linemen, 33 conductors, 111 baggagemen and freight agents, 2,874 switchmen and flagmen, 1,195 foremen and overseers, 2,377 boiler washers and engine hostlers, 4,485 brakemen, 95,713 laborers, and 1,961 miscellaneous workers among whom there are ticket agents, station hands, and other unclassified workers. There are 4 female Negro telegraphers on the lines of New York State, and in Illinois, J. H. Kelley has been a telegrapher for the Illinois Central Railroad for more than forty years.

These workers were distributed geographically as follows: In Georgia, 10,865; in Louisiana, 9,141; in Virginia, 9,010; in Alabama, 8,844; in Texas, 8,381; in Tennessee, 8,100; in Mississippi, 7,744; in North Carolina, 5,321; in Florida, 5,091; in Illinois, 4,554; in Arkansas, 4,184; in Kentucky, 3,916; in South Carolina, 3,858; in Missouri, 3,706; in Pennsylvania,

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3,569; in Ohio, 3,219; in Maryland, 2,221; in West Virginia, 2,052; in Oklahoma, 1,807; in Indiana, 1,167; and in New York, 1,127. The remaining states had less than 1,000 workers, New Hampshire at the end of the list with 1 brakeman, 2 laborers and 1 switchman.

In 1923, a survey of printing establishments revealed the facts that 1,198 Negroes were working on 113 newspapers and 14 magazines which were owned and directed by Negroes. These papers and magazines were scattered over 30 states and the District of Columbia. There were 204 proprietors and managers, 393 editorial and clerical workers, 69 foremen, 103 compositors, 70 linotype operators, 21 machinists, 32 ad men, 38 makeup men, 16 floormen, 47 proofreaders, 2 stereotypers, 2 electrotypers, 84 pressmen, 36 bookbinders, 104 mailers, and 38 other tradesmen. In 70 of these plants the composing work is done by skilled Negro compositors.

Negro women were used extensively during the war and after the war in industry.²⁹ There is an opinion that they were not employed in such large numbers as during the war. The reasons for this reduction have been the return of white girls through immigration, and the objections of union officials and members. One hundred and fifty plants were visited by a representative of the Department of Labor. In 40 of these plants the Negro women were reduced from skilled labor processes to unskilled labor processes, and in two, they were being weeded out. Nevertheless, the occupational grouping shows that Negro women are turning from domestic service to mechanical pursuits. These industries include the production of clothing, food products, furniture, glass, leather products, metal, paper products, peanuts, textiles, tobacco, toys, bookbinding, bead stringing, typing and varied other industries in which small numbers were engaged. One

Chicago company manufacturing spring cushions increased its force of colored women from 25 to 350 in four years.

The efficiency of Negro labor has been doubted since its freedom from chattel slavery. Negroes have been called lazy, indifferent workers. It has been claimed that they had to be followed up, and that they absented themselves frequently from their work, with the arrival of a circus in town or when their money was plentiful. These charges have been exploded, in the main, by the entrance of Negroes into Northern industry, where general satisfaction has been expressed with their work. Some employers report that they find Negro labor good. Others report the opposite. The estimates upon Negro labor vary about as much as the estimates upon foreign labor. One report states that Negroes are cleaner in their personal habits than some foreigners. Another report claimed that Negroes could not be employed steadily as they would lay off several days in each week. An analysis of the situation in Detroit showed that the largest labor turnover was in those plants where the smallest wage was paid, but in those plants where the highest wages were paid, there was little turnover. The prevailing opinion is that Negro labor is becoming even more stable than the former foreign labor, and the superintendents, as a rule, assert that they plan to keep Negroes in their employ. Four-fifths of the employers who were interviewed concerning Negro women stated that they found no faults among Negro women which were not common to all women workers, and about 90 per cent stated that they intended to continue the employment of Negro women. One large firm stated that they had employed Negroes for years and that they had rendered loyal service, some with records of ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five and even thirty years of service. It had been found in this plant, by 1923, that

Negroes could do the skilled work which the standards of the shop had established, and the employers planned to continue their use.³⁰

The Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company sent out the following advertisement to Negro newspapers:

"COLORED MEN WITH WESTINGHOUSE

Ambitious workmen find promotion and reward for their honest efforts at the main works of the Westinghouse Company at East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (A picture of Negroes at work in the plant follows, with the inscription—"These men have their feet on the first step of the ladder of success.")

Write or come to the—Employment Department of Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, East Pittsburgh, Pa."

This company had about 514 Negroes on its payroll in 1923. They represented about 4 per cent of the employed force and were employed in many capacities.³¹

Much has been asserted by way of propaganda in magazine articles and on stump-orator occasions concerning Negro labor, but it may be depended on that if this labor were not satisfactory, American employers, who know how to figure for profit, would not continue their employment. It was the general impression that when the World War had ended, the demand for Negro labor would end, and the Negroes would return South. Some plants have made changes and some Negroes have returned to the South, but the Negroes as a group are still in northern industry. A report of the Pittsburgh Urban League shows that between 1923 and 1925 there were increases in several mills in the number of Negro workmen employed in the steel industry. Several periods of depression caused

many reductions. In 1923, 21 per cent of the workers in the 23 mills investigated were Negroes, and in 1925, 22 per cent of the workers in the nine largest mills investigated were Negroes. In one plant, while the plant's output was reduced by 60 per cent and white workmen were released, the entire Negro force was retained. It was also reported that the number of Negro foremen increased during these years. In fact, the basis for Negro labor, both male and female in American industry, seems to have been made permanent.

The transition to an industrial activity and an economic position which will bring the Negro group to a place comparable with other race groups in America has not been completed. It is a continuous process at the present time in Negro life. Thousands of Negroes are coming into urban centers, and industrial opportunities are open to them, but they are often unprepared for them, since their former contacts have been in rural communities and in agriculture. The education of the Negro worker looms up as one of the large problems of the present and the future. The tide of prejudice has been continuing where colored and white workmen meet and an increasing spirit of cooperation must be developed, so that each group may realize that the successful solution of the Labor problem, from the point of view of the worker, lies largely in the worker's cooperation without regard to race or sex. The use of the Negro as a strike-breaker, and his increasing employment shows the great danger to Labor from the lack of organization. The variation often made in wage-agreements between the races likewise argues for the unionization of Negro Labor. The tradition of the absolute racial inferiority of the Negro should be examined by all workers, and the open-minded attitude should be adopted. Negro business men should bend

their efforts toward the building of enterprises which will give employment to Negro workers, and both in the quality of the product as well as in labor itself, Negro Labor would demonstrate its efficiency. Capitalism through human bondage, a debasing wage slavery, and a restricted occupational life has made possible the continual exploitation of its black workers, who struggle not only against the usual obstacles of the average American workingman but also against the special handicaps of race and color. One need not leave the role of historian and essay the role of prophet to realize that the future of Negro Labor would be immeasurably advanced by education, co-operation, organization and racial self-help. The history of the past economic development presages a greater advance in the immediate future. These facts present the view at the threshold of a closed door which now is slowly being pushed open by Negro labor—the door to larger industrial opportunity.

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APPENDIX

I

A PLANTATION RECORD

CROP SALES

1849	
Cotton Sold.....	\$ 7,109.52
Corn Sold.....	2,601.15
	<hr/>
	\$ 9,710.67
1850.	
Cotton Sold.....	\$20,583.18
Corn Sold.....	1,964.10
	<hr/>
	\$22,547.28
1851	
Cotton Sold.....	\$11,242.57
Corn Sold.....	964.20
	<hr/>
	\$12,206.77
1852	
Cotton Sold.....	\$19,990.27
Corn Sold.....	1,261.00
Rice and Fodder.....	786.29
	<hr/>
	\$22,037.56
1853	
Cotton Sold.....	\$11,977.25
Corn Sold.....	1,595.89
Rice and Fodder.....	1,013.41
	<hr/>
	\$14,586.55
Total 5 Years.....	\$81,088.83
Average	16,217.76
Clear gain per annum	\$ 4,731.18
J. H. Hammond Papers, 1849-1850.	

EXPENDITURES

1849	
Plantation.....	\$ 5,130.53
Family	4,139.25
	<hr/>
	\$ 9,269.78
1850	
Plantation	\$ 4,499.31
Family	5,297.43
	<hr/>
	\$ 9,796.74
1851	
Plantation	\$ 5,777.29
Family	8,310.85
	<hr/>
	\$14,088.14
1852	
Plantation	\$ 5,328.34
Family	5,838.00
	<hr/>
	\$11,166.34
1853	
Plantation	\$ 6,283.90
Family	8,328.00
	<hr/>
	\$14,611.90
Total 5 Years	\$58,932.90
Average	11,786.58

II

CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL LABOR UNION

Article I.

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the National Labor Union, and its jurisdiction shall be confined to the United States.

Article II.

Section 1. The National Labor Union shall be composed of such organizations as may now or hereafter exist, having for their object the amelioration and advancement of those who labor for a living.

Section 2. Each organization shall be entitled to one representative, and each State Labor Union to three for the State at Large in the National Labor Union, provided that representatives derive their election direct from the organizations they claim to represent.

Article III.

Section 1. The officers of the National Labor Union shall be elected annually on the third day of the session, and shall hold their offices until their successors are duly elected. They shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording and Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and an Executive Committee of nine members.

Section 2. The above named officers shall constitute a Bureau of Labor.

Section 3. There shall be one Vice-President for each State, Territory, and the District of Columbia, to be chosen by the State Labor Unions where they exist. Where there are no State Labor Unions, by the State Labor Conventions at their next meeting preceding the annual meeting of the National Labor Union. If neither elect a Vice-President, then the National Labor Union shall have power to appoint at their regular annual meeting.

Section 4. The Bureau of Labor shall be located in the City of Washington, D. C.

Article IV.

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the National Labor Union and "the Bureau of Labor" and preserve order and enforce the laws. He shall sign all orders for money drawn on the Treasurer by the Secretary, and be the Custodian of the Seal, which shall be affixed to all documents emanating from his office, and perform such other duties as may be required of him by the Bureau of Labor, and the interest of the various organizations in the several states demand.

Section 2. The Vice-President shall, in the absence or disabilities of the President, perform the duties of his office.

Article V.

Section 1. The Recording Secretary shall keep a correct account of the proceedings of the National Labor Union and the Bureau of Labor. He shall fill all blanks and write all orders for money on the Treasurer. He shall keep a debit and credit account, and shall report the condition of the finances at each meeting of the Bureau of Labor, and perform such other service as may be required by the National Labor Union and Bureau of Labor. In his absence, the Assistant Secretary shall perform the duties of his office.

Article VI.

Section 1. The Treasurer shall secure all money, pay all bills and orders that may be drawn on him, and properly attested. He shall keep a debit and credit account, and report at each meeting of the Bureau of Labor. He may be required to give such bonds with such security as the Bureau may require.

Article VII.

Section 1. The Bureau of Labor shall meet at least once in each month, at such time and places as the interest of the Union may require. They shall fill all vacancies in said Bureau. They shall have power to grant charters to the various organizations in the different states. In connection with the President they shall advise and superintend the organization of Labor Unions, land, loan, building and co-operative associations generally, in the different states. They shall inquire into and inform the various organizations as to when, where and how money can be obtained, in what sums, and at what rate of interest, and what security will be required. They shall give especial attention to protecting the rights of workingmen of the various organizations chartered by the National Labor Union by bringing to justice those who may rob them of their wages, and by bringing about such legislation in the several states as may be necessary for the interest and advancement of the condition of the laboring classes.

Section 2. They shall regulate the salary of the President,

Secretary, and such other officers as may be necessary to accomplish the objects of the National Labor Union.

Section 3. They shall report annually to the National Labor Union the condition of the various organizations, also the general condition of colored labor in the United States, with recommendations, as they may think necessary.

Section. 4. They shall, in connection with the President, act as agent for the securing of employment, to labor of all kinds, and its transfer from one state to another.

Section 5. All communications in relation to business pertaining to the Labor Union or Bureau of Labor must be marked on the envelope "Official," and addressed to the President, Post Office Box 191, Washington, D. C.

Article VIII.

Section 1. Seven members, in any organization, shall be sufficient to apply for a charter, which shall be granted on the payment of five dollars.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of each organization to prepare an annual statement of the condition of said organization, with such other information as may be to the interest of workmen, and forward it to the Bureau at least one month before the meeting of the National Labor Union, that the reports may be printed for the use and benefit of the National Labor Union at its annual meetings.

Article IX.

Section 1. Each local organization or representative shall pay a tax of ten cents annually per member. The tax of an organization shall be paid on the presentation of the credentials of the delegate; and no delegate shall be allowed to take part in the deliberations of the Union until the tax is paid.

Article X.

Section 1. The meeting of the National Labor Union shall be held on the second Monday of December in each year; and shall commence its session at 12 M.

Section 2. Special meetings of the National Labor Union may be called by the President, upon the request of the Bureau of Labor.

Article XI.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

1. Report of Committee on Credentials.
2. Roll of Members.
3. Reading of Minutes.
4. Report of Bureau of Labor.
5. Report of Standing and Special Committees.
6. Report of Local Organizations.
7. Unfinished Business.
8. New Business.
9. Adjournment.

Article XII.

Section 1. This Constitution shall only be altered or amended at the regular annual meetings of the National Labor Union by a two-thirds vote of all members present.

ISAAC MYERS, *President*,
 GEO. T. DOWNING, *Vice-President*,
 LEWIS H. DOUGLASS, *Secretary*,
 CALVIN CRUSOR, *Treasurer*.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sella Martin	Hon. C. H. Hamilton	John H. Butler
Isaiair C. Weirs	G. M. Mabson	George Myers
Anthony Bowen	D. M. Simons	F. G. Barbadoes

(1) *The New Era*, April 21, 1870.

III

ADDRESS TO THE COLORED WORKING- MEN OF THE UNITED STATES, TRADES, LABOR, AND INDUSTRIAL UNIONS.

In accordance with Article X, Section 1, Constitution of the Colored National Labor Union, adopted in Convention, December 9, 1869, in the City of Washington, D. C., the second annual meeting will be held at the Union League Hall, Washington, D. C., commencing at 12 o'clock M., January 9, 1871.

Your attention is particularly called to Article II, of the Constitution, Section 1: "The National Labor Union shall be composed of such organizations as may now or hereafter exist, having for their object the amelioration and advancement of the condition of those who labor for a living. Section 2. Each organization shall be entitled to one representative, and each State Labor Union to three for the State at large, in the National Labor Union, provided that representatives derive their election direct from the organization they claim to represent."

Your attention is further invited to Article IX, Section 1. "Each local organization shall pay a tax of ten cents per member; each state or National organization, ten dollars. The tax of an organization shall be paid upon the presentation of the credentials of the delegates, and no delegate shall be allowed to take part in the deliberations of the Union until the tax is paid." Delegates will be required to furnish certified copies of the number of members of the associations they represent. Delegates to the meetings of the Union are admitted without regard to race, color, or sex.

In addition to the regular report of each organization, delegates are requested to inform themselves upon the following general questions:

First—What are the occupations in which colored men are more generally employed in your city, county, or state; the rate of wages; the average time made annually.

Second—The number of schools; their grade, average attendance of scholars; how many supported by the state; by charitable institutions; also private schools.

Third—The number of land, building and co-operative associations; their value in real estate and cash.

Fourth—What means or remedy, in your judgment, can best be applied to advance the material interest of the workingmen in your locality and in the United States?

The great importance and necessity of the organization of labor, for its own benefit and the development of the industries of the country, should prompt the workingmen of all occupations in the several states to send delegates to this annual meeting of the National Labor Union.

Newspapers throughout the country will please copy.

ISAAC MYERS, President,
LEWIS H. DOUGLASS, Secretary.¹

(1) *New National Era*, November 17, 1870.

IV

SELECTED OCCUPATIONS OF NEGROES:

1890, 1900, 1910

Negroes in Agricultural Pursuits

	1890	1900	1910
Total	1,728,325	2,143,154	2,881,454
Agricultural Laborers	1,106,728	1,344,125	1,943,755
Dairymen and Dairywomen	666	537	2,721
Farmers, Planters and Overseers.....	590,666	757,822	879,600
Gardeners, Florists, Nurserymen, etc.....	5,488	2,456	5,171
Lumbermen and Raftsmen	3,742	6,222	14,309
Stockraisers, Herders and Drovers.....	1,325	1,311	2,147
Woodchoppers	7,676	9,703	8,725
Turpentine Farmers and Laborers.....	12,034	20,744	24,630
Other Agricultural Pursuits.....	.....	234	396

Negroes in Professional Pursuits

	1890	1900	1910
Total	33,994	47,219	66,246
Actors, Professional Showmen.....	1,490	2,020	3,088
Architects, Designers, Draftsmen.....	44	52	154
Artists, Teachers of Art.....	150	236	329
Clergymen	12,159	15,528	17,996
Dentists	120	212	478
Electricians, Engineers, Civil, etc., Surveyors	279	305	970
Journalists	134	210	220
Lawyers	431	728	915
Literary and Scientific Persons.....	91	99	315
Musicians and Teachers of Music.....	1,881	3,915	5,606
Officials (Government)	1,115	645	1,071
Physicians and Surgeons.....	909	1,734	3,409
Teachers and Professors in Colleges.....	15,100	21,267	29,772
Other Professional Service.....	91	268	1,923

Negroes in Domestic and Personal Service

	1890	1900	1910
Total	956,754	1,317,859	1,357,500
Barbers and Hairdressers.....	17,480	19,942	22,534
Boarding- and Lodging-house Keepers.....	2,323	4,187	10,401
Hotel-Keepers	420	481	973
Janitors and Sextons.....	5,945	11,536	24,871
Laborers (not specified).....	349,002	545,935	246,242
Launderers and Laundresses.....	153,684	220,104	382,510
Nurses and Midwives.....	5,213	19,431	22,969
Restaurant-Keepers	2,157	3,993	6,369
Saloon-Keepers	932	890	1,663
Bartenders	1,878	2,472	2,666
Servants and Waiters.....	401,215	465,734	605,506
Housekeepers and Stewards.....	9,248	10,596	11,624
Soldiers, Sailors, Marines.....	2,782	3,498	3,734
Watchmen, Policemen, Firemen.....	2,019	2,993	4,648
Other Domestic and Personal Service.....	2,456	6,067	10,690

Negroes in Trade and Transportation

	1890	1900	1910
Total	145,717	208,789	334,422
Agents	1,172	2,105	4,355
Bankers and Brokers.....	114	82	241
Boatmen and Sailors.....	6,545	6,504	7,469
Bookkeepers and Accountants	293	475	1,628
Clerks and Copyists.....	4,972	6,172	13,578
Stenographers and Typists.....	126	395	1,081
Commercial Travelers	103	187	332
Draymen, Hackmen, Teamsters.....	43,963	67,585	96,897
Foremen and Overseers.....	471	565	1,854
Hostlers	10,500	14,496	12,976
Hucksters and Peddlers.....	2,516	3,270	3,434
Livery Stable Keepers	390	309	403
Merchants and Dealers (except wholesale)..	6,646	9,095	13,924
Merchants and Dealers (wholesale).....	535	148	257
Messengers, Errand- and Office-boys.....	4,119	5,075	8,816
Officials of Banks and Companies.....	213	149	1,115
Packers and Shippers.....	567	1,865	2,944
Porters, Helpers in Stores.....	11,694	28,977	45,256
Salesmen and Saleswomen.....	1,166	2,799	4,699
Steam Railroad Employees.....	47,548	55,327	103,606
Street Railway Employees.....	589	629	3,748
Telegraph and Telephone Linemen.....	271	529	1,058
Telephone and Telegraph Operators.....	156	69	362
Undertakers	231	453	953
Other Persons in Trade and Transportation.	817	1,529	3,436

Negroes in Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits

	1890	1900	1910
Total	207,588	275,086	552,581
<i>Building Trades</i>			
Carpenters and Joiners.....	22,581	21,113	31,549
Masons, Brick and Stone.....	9,760	14,386	23,650
Painters, Glaziers, Varnishers.....	4,447	5,782	9,063
Paperhangers	274	586	1,026
Plasterers	4,006	3,757	6,783
Plumbers, Gas and Steamfitters.....	635	1,193	3,506
Roofers and Slaters.....	243	368	721
Mechanics (not otherwise specified).....	746	377	612

APPENDIX

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	1890	1900	1910
<i>Chemical and Allied Products</i>			
Oil Well and Oil Works Employees.....	811	2,378	1,688
Other Chemical Workers.....	414	1,179	9,836
<i>Clay, Glass and Stone Products</i>			
Brick and Tile Makers, etc.....	10,521	9,970	16,941
Glassworkers	252	427	2,243
Marble and Stone Cutters.....	1,279	1,257	1,513
Potters	193	212	421
<i>Fishing and Mining</i>			
Fishermen and Oystermen.....	10,071	10,427	8,268
Miners and Quarrymen.....	19,007	36,561	60,598
<i>Food and Kindred Products</i>			
Bakers	1,135	1,521	2,564
Butter and Cheese Makers.....	81	322	116
Confectioners	477	541	707
Millers	1,487	895	1,577
Other Food Products.....	2,746	4,475	12,901
<i>Iron and Steel and Their Products</i>			
Blacksmiths	10,988	10,100	10,995
Machinists	857	1,263	3,120
Steam Boiler Makers.....	157	335	475
Other Iron and Steel Makers.....	7,357	13,293	33,101
<i>Leather and Its Finished Products</i>			
Boot and Shoe Makers and Repairers.....	5,087	4,574	6,415
Harness and Saddle Makers and Repairers	295	270	332
Leather Curriers and Tanners.....	1,103	1,073	2,139
Trunk and Leather-case Makers.....	68	23	108
<i>Liquor and Other Beverages</i>			
Bottlers and Soda-water Makers.....	88	160	914
Brewers and Maltsters	136	155	429
Distillers and Rectifiers.....	472	323	505
<i>Lumber and Its Manufacturers</i>			
Cabinetmakers	345	342	469
Coopers	2,648	2,964	2,370
Saw and Planing Mill Employees.....	17,276	33,266	108,811
Other Wood Workers.....	2,016	2,803	10,566
<i>Metal and Metal Products Other Than</i>			
<i>Iron and Steel</i>			
Brass Workers	303	110	89
Clock and Watch Makers and Repairers...	61	109	121
Gold and Silver Workers.....	66	66	127
Tinplate and Tinware Makers.....	764	924	1,502
Other Metal Workers.....	462	353	4,351
<i>Paper and Printing</i>			
Bookbinders	66	86	278
Engravers	25	22	32
Paper and Pulp Mill Operatives.....	255	321	1,093
Printers, Lithographers, and Pressmen....	944	1,220	2,244
<i>Textiles</i>			
Bleachery and Dye Works Operatives.....	225	446	556
Carpet Factory Operatives.....	83	43	246
Cotton Factory Operatives.....	1,077	1,425	6,178
Hosiery and Knitting Mill Operatives.....	64	36	718
Silk Mill Operatives.....	24	136	513
Woolen Mill Operatives.....	346	169	262
Other Textile Mill Operatives.....	3,736	300	1,231
Dressmakers	7,586	12,569	20,265
Milliners	386	180	1,015
Seamstresses	11,846	11,537	18,642
Tailors and Tailoresses.....	1,330	1,845	7,901
Hat and Cap Makers.....	56	22	107
Shirt, Collar and Cuff Makers.....	85	181	980
Other Textile Workers.....	83	159	503

Miscellaneous Industries

	1890	1900	1910
Broom and Brush Makers.....	174	213	738
Charcoal, Coke and Lime Burners.....	1,595	3,870	5,250
Engineers and Firemen (not locomotive)...	6,326	10,224	20,169
Glove Makers	10	15	30
Manufacturers and Officials.....	1,077	1,186	5,418
Model and Pattern Makers.....	18	24	53
Photographers	190	247	404
Rubber Factory Operatives.....	42	44	178
Tobacco and Cigar Factory Operatives....	15,004	15,349	24,014
Upholsterers	724	1,045	1,127
Other Miscellaneous Industries.....	13,496	21,939	49,214

V

NEGROES IN MANUFACTURING AND MECHANICAL INDUSTRIES IN 1920

Blacksmiths	9,047
Boilermakers	1,420
Brickmasons	10,736
Carpenters and Cabinetmakers	34,916
Cigar and Tobacco Workers	19,849
Clay, Glass and Stone Industries.....	3,596
Clothing Industries	13,888
Coopers	2,252
Dressmakers	27,160
Electricians	1,411
Engineers (locomotive)	111
Engineers (stationary)	6,353
Firemen (locomotive)	6,505
Firemen (stationary)	23,135
Harness and Saddle Industries.....	255
<i>Food Industries</i>	
Bakers	3,887
Butter, Cheese and Condensed Milk Factory.....	190
Candy Factories	1,405
Fish Curing and Packing.....	3,191
Flour and Grain Mill.....	871
Fruit and Vegetable Canning.....	494
Slaughter and Packing Houses	7,558
Sugar Factories and Refineries.....	161
Other Food Products.....	1,570
Iron and Steel and Other Metal Industries.....	60,307
Jewelry and Engraving.....	601
Lumber and Furniture.....	9,598
Building and Building Contractors.....	1,454
Foremen and Overseers (manufacturing).....	3,287
Managers and Superintendents.....	163
Manufacturers and Officials.....	354
Milliners	607
Painters, Glaziers, Varnishers.....	9,512
Paper and Pulp Mills.....	845
Plasterers and Paperhangers.....	8,125
Plumbers, Gas and Steam Fitters.....	3,599
Printers and Engravers.....	3,405
Shoe Factory Employees.....	1,306
Shoemakers and Cobblers (not in factories).....	4,707
Stone Cutters	280
Upholsterers	648

Tailors	6,892
Tanneries	971
<i>Textiles</i>	
Carpet Mills	191
Cotton Mills	3,649
Knitting Mills	1,034
Lace and Embroidery Mills.....	227
Silk Mills	328
Woolen and Worsted Mills.....	322
Other Textile Mills.....	1,631
Tinsmiths, Coppersmiths, Roofers.....	1,651
Other Industries	26,271

SUMMARY

Negroes in Industries, 1910	406,582
Negroes in Industries, 1920	566,680
Negroes in Textile Industries, 1900	2,949
Negroes in Textile Industries, 1910	11,333
Negroes in Textile Industries, 1920	24,734

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